

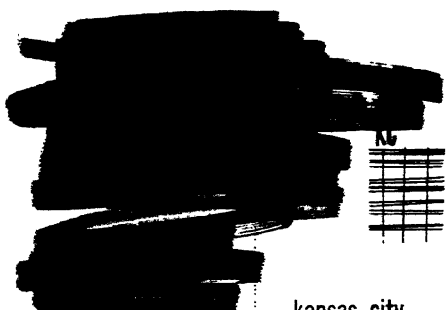
CHRONICLE OF AN
AMERICAN CRUSADER

SAMUEL S. MAYERBERG

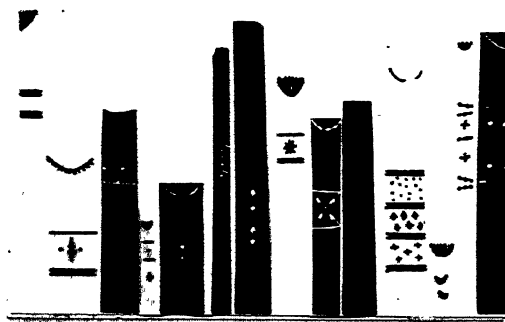
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CHRONICLE OF
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CHRONICLE OF
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ALUMNI LECTURES
DELIVERED AT THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE
Cincinnati, Ohio, December 7 - 10, 1942

BY
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FOREWORD BY
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DEDICATED

To My Beloved Wife

CHERISHED COMPANION

TRUE COUNSELLOR • FAITHFUL FRIEND

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Grateful acknowledgment is made to my teacher and friend, Dr. Julian Morgenstern, for his generous Foreword; to my sister, Florence, for her comprehensive instruction in High School, which has given me permanent respect for history; to Miss Rae Kingsbaker, instructor in English at the Junior College of Kansas City, for her expert examination of the manuscript; to Mrs. Arthur Hendrickson for her careful typing; to Mr. J. Doohan, Librarian of *The Kansas City Star* for his invaluable aid in locating items; to Judge Merrill E. Otis for his wise criticisms; to Miss Gertrude Ebert and Mrs. Alvin J. Lorie for their kindness in undertaking the dreary task of proof-reading.

S. S. M.

Kansas City, Missouri
January, 1943.

FOREWORD

The author did not give this book its name. His innate modesty would have forbidden him even to think of a title as pretentious as that which the little volume now bears. His personal inclination was to name his work *The Rabbi as Civic Leader*, the general theme of the four lectures herein contained, which he delivered to the Faculty and students of the Hebrew Union College as the annual "Alumni Lectures" of 1942. But what manner of title would that have been for a work as significant, as sincere and as thrilling as this!

Not only did I hear the lectures but I also read the finished manuscript. The lectures, presented on successive afternoons in the College Chapel, had stirred both Faculty and students deeply. One of the older students commented on the fourth and final lecture in the series, "It had us all sitting on the edges of our seats." The lectures were as absorbing in the reading as in the hearing. I saw in the story which they unfolded the autobiography of a modern crusader, the humble and sincere account of his preparatory self-discipline, and the frank, unvarnished record of the crusade which he inaugurated single-handedly and led to its very end. I was deeply moved. And so I begged him to permit me to give to his book a title more truly descriptive, worthier and more appealing, and one which, I knew, he would not have had the temerity to give to it himself. With characteristic humility and that generous confidence which, as repeated reference in the lectures shows, he has always

reposed in me, his former teacher, he readily allowed me to godfather his literary child. The creation is altogether his. Only the name is mine. As this Foreword is being written, the author has not the slightest idea what his offspring's name will be. Godfathering in this manner is a grave responsibility, but also a delightful privilege.

And I am confident that the name which I have chosen is singularly appropriate. To me the crusader has always been a romantic figure, and this, too, though I am a scion of that people who were the innocent and helpless chief victims of the Crusades. One cannot but admire, and perhaps even be stirred to emulation, by the sincerity of the crusader, his almost childlike humility, his passion for truth and right as he saw them, his sense of consecration and his unswerving devotion to a high cause, his dauntless courage, his patience and preserverance in his service, his deep and reverent conviction that he was waging the war of the Lord, and that the kingdom of God on earth would be the fruit of his faithfulness and his victory. I know, of course, that actually few, and perhaps not even a single one, of the real flesh and blood Crusaders were endowed with all, or even with most, of these virtues. But I like to think of the crusader in the abstract, of *the* Crusader, and to believe that there may indeed have been at least one such, a veritable Ivanhoe among his fellows, who may well serve as the eternal pattern of all that the true crusader might be and should be.

It is thrilling to come face to face with such a true crusader in contemporary life, one in whom all these high qualities are embodied in active, purposeful and consecrated living. It is enheartening to know that such a person does exist. It is indescribably gratifying to realize that he is one of your own pupils. This realization dawned upon me as

first I heard these lectures, and it became clearer and more illuminating as I read the pages of this manuscript. Obviously this realization has suggested a part of my title.

The other part of the title is suggested by a different consideration. Only in America, only in the United States, of all the lands and all the nations of the earth, could a crusade, such as is recorded in this book, be waged. We know all too well, from oft-repeated and shameful experience, that American democracy has its vices and infamies as well as its virtues and glories. Many of its present realities are as sad and depressing as its potentialities are hopeful and exhilarating. The heart of the American citizen and voter is sound, even though torpid. His aspiration for his nation is high; he craves for it a position of leadership and honor in all that makes for human betterment and the heightening of the beauty and felicity of existence. His civic purpose is right, but all too often its execution is irresponsible and inefficient. Meaning well himself, he is easily beguiled by the fair promises and alluring catch-words of ruthless aspirants to political power and privilege. Absorbed in our characteristic, mad rush for wealth and pleasure, he readily relinquishes his civic obligations to the professional politician and office-holder; and then, dismayed and disgusted by the havoc which they work and the venality which they spread wide and deep, he resigns himself, with only vague mumblings of dissatisfaction and protest, and accepts the situation as inevitable and incurable. Thus our vicious political system takes form and grows into an ugly, malevolent, ravening creature, particularly in its municipal, county and state organization, and puts forth its foul and defiling tentacles to grasp at our national administration itself.

To seek to awaken the citizenry of a community from its deep lethargy is a venturesome undertaking. To carry on the

struggle against the ruthless, godless enemy, fearlessly, patiently, persistently, day by day, year by year, swayed by a sense of consecration, animated by the conviction that this, too, is the service of God, is indeed a crusade, a uniquely American crusade. And to achieve victory in the end means to bring deliverance and freedom to a captive city or state and, in some measure at least, to establish the kingdom of God on earth. Such a leader is an American crusader in truth. We have had a few such in recent years in different communities. They are the living exponents of the true potentialities of American democracy. Their example and their story point the way for those other American crusaders who soon must and will arise to redeem our American political and civic life and bring the fulfillment of our loftiest visions of democratic, cooperative American living. And so, very properly, I believe, I have entitled this significant book, *Chronicle of an American Crusader*.

It may seem to some a bit incongruous to dub a Jew, and a rabbi at that, a crusader. Yet this too could happen only in America. In no other country and in no other nation could a Jew possibly play the role depicted in these pages. Yet in more than one American city a Jew has dared to be the crusader and the redeemer of the civic life of his community.

And why should it not be so? For call him by the Christian term, crusader, or, as our author does, by the older, more distinctively Jewish and far more significant name, prophet, the service is invariably the same, to function as the stubborn, incorruptible, unswervable servant of the Lord, doing the work of God, and laboring humbly, devotedly and with constant self-sacrifice to redeem that holiest of sanctuaries, the human soul, the soul of his fellow-citizens, the soul of his community, the soul of his

nation, from the evil besetting it on all sides and threatening to drag it down to the lowest depths, to deliver it and set it upon the heights, where it may live freely and create nobly in fulfillment of the divinely appointed purpose of existence. Prophet or crusader, Christian or Jew, what is the difference, for is not this vision of democracy, this hope, this struggle, this victory, an ineradicable part of our common Judaeo-Christian heritage? And whether the leader be Christian or Jew, rabbi, priest or pastor, and whether we dub him prophet or crusader or both, so long as the battle be waged, victory won and redemption achieved, what does it matter? But it does matter much that here in America, in our beloved nation, things like this must happen, that leaders like this must arise, can arise, do arise, and will arise. In this realization we may all find assurance and renewal of faith. And in the life-story of one crusader and of the crusade which he waged so devotedly, so wisely and so successfully, we Americans, and especially the clergy among us, Jew and Christian alike, may find guidance and inexhaustible inspiration.

And so I present, I hope to a large and understanding public, this American crusader, Rabbi Samuel S. Mayerberg, Hebrew Union College, 1917, and the chronicle of his crusade, the "Alumni Lectures" of 1942.

JULIAN MORGENSTERN,
President, Hebrew Union College

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CHAPTER I

EARLY BEGINNINGS

DR. MORGENSTERN, MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY, SENIORS
AND MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT BODY:

"I am not worthy of all the mercies and of all the truth, which Thou hast shown unto thy servant"; . . . Thus spoke our ancestor Jacob during a great crisis in his life. The sense of unworthiness manifest in his words finds a resounding echo in my heart. Truly, with no false modesty but with complete sincerity I say that I am unworthy of the high honor of serving as Hebrew Union College Alumni Lecturer in this critical year of America's and of Israel's history.

Many months ago when the letter of my beloved friend, Dr. Morgenstern, came with the invitation from the Faculty and from the Board of Governors, my heart was overwhelmed with a decided mixture of emotions. At first it was elation, as gratitude encompassed my whole being. Then despair and regret gripped me. My conscience kept whispering to me, "Here is the finest and most challenging opportunity of your whole ministry and you are not prepared for it! What can you bring to the illustrious scholars of Hebrew Union College? Your scholarship is infinitesimal compared with theirs! What can you bring to the seniors and the student body that the members of the esteemed Faculty have not already brought with scintillating wisdom? An almost ir-

resistible impulse to decline the cherished invitation with my profoundest thanks seized me. However, another thought came into my mind. Perhaps, though I can add nothing to the totality of scholarship at my Alma Mater, there may be phases of my work in a quarter of a century in the active rabbinate, the relating of which may prove of some value to young men just entering the blessed Jewish ministry. Remembering the fact that the Torah contains more negative commandments than positive ones, I concluded that my discourses might be helpful if the young rabbis might be told some of my glaring mistakes and some of my great failures. Forewarned, they might intelligently avoid them. This conclusion was substantiated by the conviction that the beloved President of the College and his honored colleagues would not have extended the invitation, knowing my many deficiencies, if they had not felt sincerely that some part of my record might prove useful to men who would soon be my colleagues. In the midst of these turbulent emotions, the words of Jeremiah came to me. In a decidedly microscopic way, of course, his words might be applied to my situation. In his consecration vision, he humbly and reverently says, as you recall so well:

"Behold I cannot speak, for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, say not: I am a child; but to whomsoever I shall send thee, thou shalt go."

With a very slight similitude to that sentiment, I am here to speak on the general theme, "The Rabbi as Civic Leader." Lest there be even a fleeting implication that I consider myself as example or prototype of the rabbi as civic leader, I hasten to state that the subject assigned to me would be

much more significant if it were entitled, "The Potentials of the Rabbi as Civic Leader," or "The Need" or "The Scope of the Rabbi as Civic Leader." Therefore, while the recitation of pertinent facts in my ministry must necessarily be told in the first person because they are so completely personal, much of my discourse will bear upon my aspirations rather than upon their fulfillment, upon my yearning for high achievement rather than upon the attainment of great goals. It has been said by Browning in his "Andrea Del Sarto": "Oh! but a man's reach should exceed his grasp." Pirke Aboth intimates something of this in the words of Rabbi Tarphon: "It is not thy duty to complete the work; but neither art thou free to desist from it." (Pirke Aboth 2:2). Possibly this sentiment, like other Jewish motifs which influenced Robert Browning, might have prompted him to say in his masterly poem, "Cleon,"

Man might live at first
The animal life; but is there nothing more?
In due time let him critically learn
How he lives; and, the more he gets to know
Of his own life's adaptabilities,
The more joy-giving will his life become.
Thus man, who hath this quality, is best.

When my mind takes me back over the fleeting years of my ministry, I think quite naturally of my youth, my early youth. It is not an overstatement to tell you that as far back as my mind can pierce the obscurity of my childhood, I wanted to be a rabbi. My father was the rabbi for nearly forty years in my birthplace, Goldsboro, North Carolina. He ministered during that time to his State and to several

others in the South. Although long dead, he still is an ideal to me. In my youth he epitomized all that was good and noble. Such was his children's reliance upon him, that when an earthquake came and caused the chimney of the parsonage to fall with a crash into the living-room, the whole family, gathering about him, went out into the raging rain storm without fear, and finally went back into the house assured that as long as he was with us no harm could befall us. With equal vividness I recollect the method by which he cured my twin and me of our sickening terror of thunderstorms. One day during the height of an electric storm, when the crashing thunder shook the house to its very foundations and the flashing lightning seemed to pierce every window and every wall, he took us by the hand and led us to a settee on the veranda. While we sat beside him, each holding one of his hands, we lost all fear despite the din of thunder and the dazzling streaks of lightning.

It was in his Temple that I first received, perhaps by absorption rather than by instruction, the spiritual experiences which abide with me to this day. Even at the age of five or six I was impressed with the beauty and the sanctity of the service when my father uttered the prayers in his sonorous, earnest voice. I seemed to sense that he was talking directly to God. My angelic mother had no difficulty in impressing upon her children the need for complete decorum at such a time. After services on Sabbath morning, my twin and I would repair to the dining-room; there, rolling a napkin around two forks, we fashioned our own Torah, which we carefully placed behind the curtains. In due time, with much ceremony and song, we would take out the Scroll

and proceed to imitate Dad's reading with our incoherent babblings, which could have had no counterpart in any language of the world.

Through childhood to young manhood this devotion to the idea of ministry enveloped my whole being. It was but natural that I attentively observed my father and mother in their work and in their home life; for, in a very real sense, my mother's life was a beautiful ministry. Utterly without covetousness, possessed of infinite patience, kindness and courage, she made our home a sanctuary of love and spirituality. The Sabbath, the holydays and holidays were welcome guests in our home, because my mother's ingenuity and loveliness made them vibrant with sweet and unforgettable significance. Her larder was never too empty to feed the unkempt "schnorrers" (Jewish transients) my father would unexpectedly bring home to meals, after he had tramped from store to store to gather a few dollars for the roving scholar or the dowry-seeking father, who wanted to find a husband for his daughter in far away Russia or Poland. At such times the family might be given small portions or none at all, while the stranger received abundantly.

Mother was not only the business manager of the family, cautiously expending my father's meager salary so wisely that the wolf never quite reached the door, but she was also the inspirer of her children and husband alike. When problems, both communal and personal, bore down upon him, it was mother who brought hope and encouragement to meet the issues and to solve them.

Both parents encouraged me in my ever-increasing desire to become a rabbi. But my father made one great mistake,

which he recognized too late and which he felt to the day of his death. He had a theory, which sprang out of the harshness and bitter frustration of his own youth. He was determined that his children should have the full opportunities for play and recreation which he had been denied by an exacting father and by economic pressure. Therefore, in planning the education of his youngsters, he was insistent upon the correct acquisition of the required secular courses. While recognizing the validity and the need of Jewish study, he made minimal demands upon our time. In fact he encouraged us to spend most of our leisure in the playing of baseball and football and such other games as were in the purview of southern young folk of that time. That attitude, while currently appreciated by the active young creatures in the family, ultimately worked a great hardship upon me.

He became aware of that himself, when he had finally procured a catalogue of the Hebrew Union College and discovered the requirements for entrance. Then we set frantically to work. It was the summer of 1908, and I had just graduated from High School. My Jewish knowledge consisted of the courses customary in religious school in those days plus a halting reading knowledge of Hebrew, with almost no vocabulary. Realizing then what I had missed during the nine or ten years when he could have been teaching me at least the traditional prayers and the whole Bible, with perhaps a few tractates of Mishna and even a page or two of Talmud, for he himself was possessed of wide and deep knowledge, he sanely and regretfully faced reality. After considerable thought he said to me, "Son, I know now that I have failed to prepare you for your life's work; but in

reality your loss is not irreparable. My failure to acquaint you with necessary studies will only delay you and make your work more difficult. By earnest application you can obtain from the great men at the college all the knowledge I have failed to give you and very much more than I could have given. The catalogue states that for entrance you will need a reading and a translating knowledge of the easy portions of B'reshith (Genesis) and also a grasp of biblical history. We shall concentrate in these months upon our Hebrew reading and translating."

With keen insight he selected the Akedah (Genesis 22) and Vayeshev (Genesis 37). Together we read and reread, first translating each word separately, then by phrase and context. In a crude way we parsed verbs and declined nouns. So diligently did we prepare those two sections that I memorized them completely and have no difficulty in recalling them to this day.

September rolled around with surprising speed. Then the great day came for our journey to Cincinnati. It was a glad-some and yet fearful occasion for me. Until that time I had ridden on a train only three or four times, and never over thirty or forty miles. More important still, it was the first time I had ever been separated from my twin for an hour in all the sixteen years of our life. Through that whole trip I was so wretchedly homesick for him and for my mother that I became physically ill.

The proximity of the holydays made it necessary for Dad to return home after three days with me, during which time I enrolled as a freshman at the University of Cincinnati. In the meanwhile I kept on reviewing those two passages

in Genesis. In due time I was instructed to come to the college for examination. That was an unforgettable day. The college then occupied what had, at one time, been an imposing mansion on West Sixth Street. Some older student, noticing my timidity, was kind and ushered me about the building. I entered the long, high-ceilinged room which housed the library, and I stood aghast in the presence of so many books. I had never seen so many before in my life; in very truth I doubted that there could be so many volumes in the whole world. The ghastly thought flashed through me that I would be expected to study them and know them all!

Soon I was introduced to the three other candidates for the "D" grade, Jacob Krohngold, who passed away some years ago; Harold F. Reinhart, who is now serving a blessed and courageous ministry in London; and Louis L. Mann, one of our most eminent colleagues, now of Sinai in Chicago. Krohngold and Mann were quite mature at that time. They had been to university and entrance examinations were nothing to worry about for such men of wide experience. But Harold and I were nearly petrified with fear. We had almost determined to bolt out of the college and find refuge on the kindly street, when we were escorted to the library to face our inquisitors. They were Dr. Kohler, president; Dr. Mannheimer and Dr. Morgenstern. Were it not for the twinkle in his eye, I believe the austere beauty of Dr. Kohler's prophet-like face would have struck us dumb with awe. Our tension was somewhat relieved by the indulgent smile of dear old Dr. Mannheimer and by the understanding but rather tantalizing, impish smile of Dr. Morgenstern.

After some good natured banter concerning which inquisitor should have the pleasure of tormenting us, it was finally decided that Dr. Mannheimer should have that privilege.

To our credit it must be said that, after a bit of stuttering, we managed to answer quite intelligently numerous questions in reference to biblical history, though I reluctantly confess that not one of us knew who Abraham's father was! Then we came to the Hebrew part of the examination, which Harold and I, and I believe the other two also, had dreaded. Suddenly Dr. Mannheimer said, "Boys, turn in the Hebrew Bible to the 22nd chapter of Genesis." That command was so startling and so unbelievably good for me that I could hardly believe my ears. Misgivings suddenly beset me. Suppose the others are asked to read chapter after chapter until they cover all I know, what then! Fortunately for me my new found friends could barely read the text, and not one could translate a word. My turn came! With complete poise and speaking as rapidly as my tongue could form the words, I read and translated the whole chapter. I even answered grammatical questions. The examiners were amazed; so was I. It had never rolled forth so easily, so fluently before. Then I saw a quizzical smile upon the face of Dr. Morgenstern, as he suggested that we turn to the 37th chapter of Genesis. That I read with increasing facility and joy. The exam was over. I was enrolled as a full-fledged member of the "D" grade; the others were admitted on condition. However, since that distant day, comparisons, so far as I am concerned, would be somewhat odious.

As I look back with introspection upon those distant days and the full years that followed, two factors stand forth

vividly as impressions which subtly influenced me then, and which, now, in the period of maturity, still influence me and seem increasingly important. These two factors transcend all other memories of my student days. Naturally recollections of hilarious fun with my fellow students, of college enterprises and gala student functions bring a glow of pleasure and even of nostalgia. Those days and events certainly implanted joyous memories, which will remain with me as long as God grants me the breath of life.

However, the two most outstanding elements of my preparation for the rabbinate indelibly engraven upon my mind, heart and soul were derived from the instruction of and association with the notable men on the faculty of the college, who patiently and relentlessly taught me. From the vast array of information brought me by their words of wisdom, from the numerous volumes which I read and the pleasant personal associations which I was privileged to have with those scholars of the faculty, I learned with unmistakable clarity that two factors are utterly indispensable for the ministry of the rabbi: the one is an unwavering faith in God; the other is never-ending study, which will endow the rabbi with a profundity of general and Jewish scholarship. "The beginning of wisdom is the reverence of God,—a good understanding have all they that do thereafter; His praise endureth forever." (Ps. 111:10).

Assuredly that precious verse of the Psalmist is fundamental to the minister's life and to his work. Without a deep-rooted, tested faith, without wide and deep scholarship, the rabbi is not equipped for the important, romantic, vital tasks of the ministry. Ordination and graduation from the

Hebrew Union College, with the accompanying diploma, are a testimonial by the eminent scholars of the faculty, that in their honest opinion the graduate is prepared spiritually, scholastically and personally to assume the gigantic responsibilities of the Jewish ministry.

There was a time in American Jewish life, when the fallacy was widely current that it was not necessary for modern or Reform rabbis to be possessed of deep Jewish knowledge. Congregants were not thus equipped and wouldn't recognize scholarship if they saw it. Fortunately that illusion has been dispelled, and all serious-minded Reform rabbis recognize that the development of the Reform movement has given to the liberal rabbi the privilege of interpreting to the wide non-Jewish community, as well as to his own co-religionists, the philosophy of Jewish faith and history. One cannot thus interpret unless the people have confidence that the rabbi is athirst with a yearning to acquire daily knowledge, to be stored with that which he has diligently procured in the seminary and in the years after ordination. I am emphasizing this phase because I have felt it so keenly in my own ministry. The students here have a precious opportunity, which may never again be theirs, an opportunity to receive systematic instruction from renowned, scholarly men, who are consecrated to the service of God, of Israel and of all mankind. The "grave and reverend Seniors," standing now upon the very threshold of a new life, as they prepare to leave these cherished halls to take up the active endeavor of a difficult but glorious lifework, realize full well the earnest implications of this statement. To them I bring the urgent challenge to arrange every day, no matter

how full nor how pressure-filled, so that some good part of it may be devoted to the acquisition of Jewish knowledge. They will discover that with their imperishable faith, their prime foundation, their inexhaustible and ever-growing storehouse of knowledge will be their second rock, upon which they are able to build a successful career of usefulness.

To undergraduates the same earnest petition is addressed. For your own sake and for the sake of a congregation and of a community which you will be called some day to lead and to teach, apply your mental and physical energies to the acquisition of all the knowledge which you can obtain while you are here under the guidance and instruction of your esteemed faculty, which ranks so enviably among the Jewish scholars of the world. Your faithful application now will save you much heartache in the years of your active congregational work. If these appeals seem pedantic or didactic, be sure that they are emphasized because one, who has had the blessed privilege of serving God through Israel for a quarter of a century, desires to have you spared some of the frustration, despair and failure which he has experienced during those crowded and exciting years. Even today I must study classics and poetry, history and science, that I should have examined in high school or in university or college. Time that I should like to spend in scholarly research must frequently be given to the search for some of the fundamentals which I did not find available in my youth, or which I failed to acquire while the privilege was mine.

The very word "rabbi" means teacher; in our particular field it means more than the surface connotation; it means religious teacher. The congregation correctly understands

that idea; so does the general public. Both have the right to require the rabbi to be the fruitful, inspiring source of their religious instruction. It is always interesting to note with what eagerness a large percentage of the congregational membership will listen to discourses from the pulpit on subjects of Jewish knowledge and how men and women consistently attend classes in Bible, prayerbook, history, and post-biblical Jewish literature. It is always interesting to read letters containing queries upon subjects which have been observed in casual reading or which have been overheard in conversation.

Frequently one is beset by the idea that the Jewish and non-Jewish laity expect the rabbi to be possessed of an encyclopedic knowledge. The realms covered in letters and telephone calls from laymen, professors, editors, reporters and preachers are so varied that no one individual could ever hope to have all the answers at his mental finger tips. It has been my experience that an honest answer which manifests interest and which gives a promise, faithfully kept, to search for the desired information through sources with which the rabbi is usually more familiar than any one in his community, is always satisfactory and earns the appreciation and approval of the questioner.

You will find to your infinite pleasure that, in addition to your instruction, given ably in your pulpit, your teaching on the public rostrum, before church groups and in the academic classroom will be fruitful in bringing a correct and dignified appreciation of Judaism and the Jew. This will prove effective, if the rabbi is always the rabbi. He cannot be the rabbi in his own pulpit and a different person en-

tirely outside of it. He may be an entrancing and intriguing lecturer before clubs and forums, but he misses his great opportunity and he fails to derive his greatest usefulness from the occasion unless, wherever he is, he appears as a rabbi. So strong are my convictions in this regard, that I never make a public appearance anywhere without informing the chairman that I desire him to use my title of rabbi in his introduction. I want the audience to know unmistakably, whatever the nature of the program or the character of the audience, that I have my place on that program as a Jewish teacher and minister.

Some day I hope each one of you may have an opportunity similar to the rich one that has been mine for the past thirteen years at the University of Kansas in Lawrence and now at the University of Kansas City in my home city. During those years I have conducted two one-hour courses in Old Testament literature and Hebrew history. It has always been a source of gratification for me to realize that, through those courses, more than a thousand university students of Christian faith have found orientation into that supreme literature and that history unparalleled in nobility and heroism, through the Jewish consciousness of a rabbi.

Wherever my manifold engagements may take me through the Southwest, I seldom fail to find in the audience some student who took my courses at K.U. School of Religion. Some of them are now active ministers; some teach in their own church religious schools; some are professional men; some are business folk; but whatever be their vocation, I have a deep-seated conviction that their perspective on Judaism and on the Jew is fairer and deeper because a

zealous, rejoicing Jew had brought them instruction as a loyal rabbi and not as a lecturer or academician. Ministers from surrounding towns and from Lawrence have felt it imperative to tell me, after they have audited the courses through both semesters, that *their viewpoints* have been definitely widened and their understanding of the Jew and of his spiritual gifts to the world have been illuminated.

Before a rabbi can hope to share in the civic leadership of his community, it must become obvious to all who hear him and know him that he stands adamant upon his indestructible religious idealism; that his belief in God is as much a part of him as the pulse of his heart. This confident God-faith of the rabbi invests him with the unique power to reach his people and his neighbors. Mere intellectual facility and weighty knowledge cannot affect his community and cause the people to follow him trustingly. His intelligent words carry authority because they issue from a soul committed to God and His service. This God-belief and God-worship must not be a philosophic abstraction nor yet a rationalized syllogism. It must not be merely a postulate, but an absolute conviction. It must be the Reality of Reality, the one indisputable absolute in a changing world of relativity. It must be so certain, so convincing, so vivid, that it manifests itself in the unequivocal, completely sincere expression: "The Lord is King; the Lord rules; the Lord will reign forever and ever."

It is my sincere affirmation that no ministry can have credence or power without this deep-rooted God-belief, which can be voiced with honesty and earnestness. For this reason, I always find especial strength and comfort in the

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great Jewish hymn, "Adon Olam." The translation found
in our Union Prayer Book is particularly beautiful:

The Lord of all did reign supreme
Ere yet this world was made and formed,
When all was finished by His will,
Then was His name as King proclaimed.

And should these forms no more exist
He still will rule in majesty.
He was, He is, He shall remain
His glory never shall decrease.

And one is He and none there is
To be compared or joined to Him.
He ne'er began, and ne'er will end;
To Him belongs dominion's power.

He is my God, my living God;
To Him I flee when tried in grief;
My banner high, my refuge strong,
Who hears and answers when I call.

My spirit I commit to Him,
My body, too, and all I prize;
Both when I sleep and when I wake,
He is with me I shall not fear.

The clear philosophy of the hymn must be a reflection
of that which permeated the tortured soul of Job when he
exclaimed: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him."
(Job 13:15) Again does Job voice the deep religious confes-
sion which is the source of our life and faith: "I know that
my Redeemer liveth." (Job 19:25)

This certitude must encompass the earnest rabbi's whole being and must so completely dominate his thinking, his planning and his actions, that he can say as intuitively as if the glorious words had originated in his own heart, the beautiful declaration of the Psalmist: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein. For He hath founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods." (Ps. 24:1-2)

Invincible faith in the creative God was the keynote of our immortal prophetic teachers, and it must find whole-hearted echo in the hearts of rabbis who are dedicated to the promulgation of their ideals. Isaiah voiced his unmistakable conviction upon this basic theme, when he exclaimed in clarion tones, which have been heralded through the ages: "If ye will not have faith surely ye shall not be established." (Isaiah 7:9b)

With equal sincerity and significance, Habakkuk reiterates this solemn affirmation: "The righteous shall live by his faith." (Hab. 2:4b)

Such depth of conviction, suffusing the heart of the religious teacher, makes itself felt in ever vital and fresh utterances of the sincere heart. It fully summarizes the devout belief of the rabbi, ministering at the altar of God, and faithfully acknowledges that God is the Father, Savior and Protector, Helper and Supporter, Shepherd and Guardian, Healer and Redeemer, Light and Salvation, Hope, Consolation and Life.

The layman may himself possess little faith or an imperfect faith; but if he is even slightly thoughtful, he will demand, and he has a right to demand, whatever other quali-

fications he may require his rabbi to hold, that above all he be a man of unequivocal, unwavering faith. He will insist, as he ought to insist, that the words of his spiritual leader must ring true, because they are true and because they are uttered with complete sincerity, with absolute, unyielding conviction.

In every phase of rabbinical ministry, the basic value of the rabbi is found in his exquisite, his inspiring, his motivating faith. Without it he is just another man with a pleasing voice, who possesses a facile use of words. With it he is a compelling personality, a dynamo of encouragement and enlightenment, a never-failing source of help and strength. This is true in all the routine of ministerial service. It becomes even more obvious in times of crises that may arise in the life of any congregant.

When adversity looms menacingly, the layman will frequently seek the counsel of his rabbi. He asks for an appointment, not necessarily because he considers his minister the wisest man in the community, nor the most skillful expert in business and professional administration. He wants something more than wisdom from his spiritual guide. He knows before he comes that the rabbi may be unfamiliar with his specific problem or in conversant with the manifold ramifications of burdens and responsibilities, which press so heavily upon laymen in this high-pressured life in our age of speed and complexity. He seeks the rabbi's company solely because he is certain that the minister will listen with an attentive and sympathetic interest and that he will speak words of faith which transcend the immediacy of the disturbing situation. Through those words of spiritual illumina-

tion the layman finds the light he needs in order to see, in proper perspective, the current bogey which so distracts him and which beclouds his own vision. It has been my experience, in most problems congregants personally bring to me, as friend and pastor, that at rock bottom is a terrifying fear clutching at their hearts. Faith conquers fear. The radiant light of faith pierces through fear, as the effulgent rays of the morning sun dissipate the encircling mists of the dawn.

Frequently I invite the care-wracked individual to sit with me quietly in the Temple auditorium or in the little chapel. There we are for a moment in another world, away from the distraction of the busy workaday world. The solemnity and beauty of the sanctuary are conducive to spiritual thought. After a moment of complete silence, I sometimes recite the first Psalm in Hebrew and in English: "And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season, and whose leaf doth not wither, and in whatsoever he doeth he shall prosper." Occasionally I voice a simple prayer, coming directly and spontaneously from the heart, beseeching the Creative Master of the universe to send us light and strength, to cleanse us of imperfections, that we may be fully aware of His presence and be guided by His will.

Though some people may feel a temporary embarrassment in this particular procedure, that emotion soon disappears and is supplanted by a warming glow of confidence. New strength is found, comfort is felt, the weight of despair is lifted, fear is obliterated, and the reinvigorated soul is often enabled to meet life with a new vision and a new fortitude. Do not be deluded by the oft-repeated fallacy that

Jews are materialists and seek the sanctuary only on infrequent occasions. Many may neglect their spiritual opportunities under the incessant hammering of materialistic obligations. I am convinced that, in the average Jewish heart, the religious spirit is at least latent and that, when crises arise, the prayer-spirit is awakened to an irresistible yearning. Satisfaction of that longing comes only through a religious experience. When those times come, the rabbi must be the never-failing source of spiritual stimulation and direction through his own indestructible religious convictions.

Sooner or later you will be called upon to shepherd families that are like lost sheep when they are stricken by bereavement. Doubtlessly in those hours, so filled with anguish, you will find that many souls turn eagerly to God. In their own way they may express what the Psalmist has observed with such profound sentiment: "Unless Thy law had been my delight I should then have perished in mine affliction" (Ps. 119:92); and again in the same Psalm: "This is my comfort in my affliction, that Thy word hath comforted me." (Ps. 119:50)

It is to be hoped that you will encourage your people to call you in those tragic hours of sorrow. If you are endeared to them by your own sacrificial devotion to duty and by your radiant, personal beliefs, they will want you to be with them in their dark hour. They will need you. They will lean upon you; they will accept eagerly your serene assurances and clasp to their hearts every word of comfort you speak. They will sense, as never before, the full depths of the words: "The Lord, He is God." They will

recognize the primary religious humility implied in the time-honored words: "Blessed be the righteous Judge." Through your faithful ministration the bereaved ones may learn that death is not a punishment; that it is an inevitable conclusion to all earthly life, and that it is not an end to the spiritual life. In truth it is a liberation of the soul, that it may enter eternal life. Under your spiritual influence the agonized father or mother, husband or wife, son or daughter may be given the philosophy of acceptance which is the fruitage of unfaltering faith, and they too may whisper the refrain, chanted by Israel's faithful ones through the centuries: "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21b)

The spirituality of the rabbi must be so much a part of his personality that he may never be disassociated from it. It must be so intimately and vividly his personal characteristic, that, when people think of him, they automatically think of a man whose whole life at all times is encompassed by the glow of God-consciousness. If the rabbi is of such spiritual texture, his influence will normally and naturally affect the attitudes and the overt expressions of his people. No man can simulate devoutness and religious depth. Some may be good actors for a while and wear a mantle of sanctimoniousness to conceal an empty heart and a wizened soul. But the sham is soon self-revealed, and every shred of rabbinical service and influence speedily vanishes. Verily the cornerstone, yes the whole foundation, of rabbinical or any other ministerial endeavor is the unalloyed, untarnished, pulsating faith of the man himself.

You will witness the numerous circumstances in which

personal devoutness will serve the cause of God and of Israel. One of these situations will be discernible when you are approached by a few superficial members with the shallow suggestion that we ought to dispense with the prayer-book entirely and use new prayers for each service. Doubtlessly there are many folk who make a fetish of novelty in dress, in music, in modes, in everything, and in prayer. They seem to think that mere "newness" is a gauge of validity and utility. They seem to forget that there are some things upon which modernity cannot improve. The endearing words of mother-love, the affectionate and caressing expressions of marital companionship, the childish phrases of filial devotion have changed little in the centuries. So with the language of our prayerbook. The paeans whispered there, the hosannas sung, the petitions besought, all, all are ever new, ever fresh, ever beautiful, ever inspiring.

Of course I do not imply even casually that spontaneous prayers should be avoided. On the contrary, they should be used whenever desired; but as for me, I confess my personal feeling to the effect that, if the prayers of the old Siddur or Union Prayerbook are fully absorbed and all their implications saturate the spirit of the reader, and he voices them with the nuances of an awakened and throbbing soul, those prayers stand revealed as gems superbly beautiful, yes, beyond compare. Our prayer services are often the unfair victims of careless and impersonal reading. I have heard them read in the pulpit and over the radio with the lifeless tone of a business man dictating a letter to his stenographer, with no more emotion of the spirit, with no more prompting of the heart. I have heard them voiced in the other extreme,

with all the affectation of the skilled thespian moving with consummate artistry across the stage. In each case, I have writhed! Equally disturbing to me is the so-called "preacher-tone" which so many ministers, generation after generation, seem to catch by careful imitation. To me it seems unreasonable to seek or to expect a standardized manner or method of enunciating prayers. It would seem logical that prayers which have become an integral part of the rabbi's being, because he accepts them, believes in them, cherishes them, be intoned during the services with tranquillity and with perfect assurance. The test of such rendition is the obvious sincerity of the reader, who gives the unmistakable impression that, though the hallowed words are printed in a book, they are, in very truth, indelibly impressed upon his heart.

In such sense where can we find a newer, more modern, more beautiful prayer, expressing deep spiritual affirmations, than in the ancient words of *Elohai Neshamah*, beautifully translated in our Union Prayerbook: "The soul, which Thou, O God, hast given unto me, came pure from Thee. Thou hast created it, Thou hast formed it, Thou has breathed it into me. Thou hast preserved it in this body, and at the appointed time Thou wilt take it from this earth that it may enter upon life everlasting. While the breath of life is in me, I will worship Thee, Sovereign of the world and Lord of all souls. Praised be Thou, O God, in whose hands are the souls of all the living and the spirits of all flesh."

In no literature can one find a more sublime statement of lofty religious idealism than in the paraphrased *Elohai Netsor*, usually set aside in the Union Prayerbook as a medi-

tation: "O God, keep my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking guile. Be my support when grief silences my voice and my comfort when woe bends my spirit. Implant humility in my soul and strengthen my heart with perfect faith in Thee. Help me to be strong in temptation and trial and to be patient and forgiving when others wrong me. Guide me by the light of Thy countenance, that I may ever find strength in Thee, my Rock and my Redeemer."

Through such prayers, surging forth from the surcharged spirits of faithful religious leaders, our people may everlastingly be drawn close to the presence of the living God.

CHAPTER II

THE NOVICE GOES TO WORK

On June 9, 1917 the great day, which I had eagerly anticipated, at long last arrived. In this very chapel in the presence of my parents, my betrothed, the faculty, student body and friends, I was ordained by Dr. K. Kohler, as a rabbi in Israel. The full import of that event, in recollection twenty-five years later, stirs my heart. Only one who sees the fruition of a dream nourished through years of struggle and tribulation can appreciate the scope of my emotions at the hour of graduation.

My wedding date had been set for a time shortly after commencement, and I was impatient for the days to pass, so that I might go to Cleveland and claim my bride-to-be, Gertrude Rothschild, to whom I had been engaged during the larger part of my undergraduate years. However, I wasn't free to leave Cincinnati. For three years I had served as graduate assistant in the Department of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Cincinnati, and, since final examinations were due during the week, I found it necessary to conduct the examinations and grade more than three hundred papers. The last set of papers was read on the train en route to Cleveland, and the grades were returned to the registrar by special delivery. I mention this apparently trivial circumstance because I have always felt

that with my ordination so recently behind me and my wedding so close before me, I was really not in the psychological state for the prosaic and monotonous task of marking university papers. I have often consoled myself, when I have been troubled by the passing thought that I may have been unjust in my judgment of students while in such a state of ecstasy, that at least I gave every student the benefit of the doubt and passed them all.

Reference to my marriage is made because the wife of the rabbi is not only his loved companion but also his co-worker. I shall always feel that any success I may have attained in the full years of my ministry may be traced directly to the loving patience, the courageous support, the keen judgment, the deep spiritual influence my wife has manifested always. In the good hours she has been the source of my happiness; in the dark hours she has been my light and my strength.

In September, 1917, my wife and I made our first home in Detroit, Michigan, where I became the first assistant to Dr. Leo M. Franklin of Temple Beth-El. The three happy years I spent as an assistant were as important to me in the preparation for my own independent ministry as a long internship in a first class hospital is to a physician who aspires to become an expert.

Dr. Franklin was invariably kind to me. I had known him during my student days, when I had the high privilege of living in the home of his mother and sisters. I loved them with the same affection I held for my kinsfolk.

Dr. Franklin (I teasingly called him "the Bishop" and he jestingly called me "the Vicar") realized, with his ever-

generous heart, that I was a novice, completely unaware of the responsibilities and the techniques of the active ministry. It is not extravagant to say that during the first year Rabbi Franklin assisted me far more than I assisted him. Of course, I knew how to conduct a Sabbath or holyday service, and I had on several occasions officiated at funerals. Beyond those experiences I was totally devoid of information pertaining to the ramifications of rabbinical work. It was only through observing my senior colleague that I learned how to conduct a marriage ceremony. The correct approach to families in deep mourning was unknown to me. The proper attitude and the select words to be used in hospitals at the bedside of the ill and the convalescent were all unfamiliar, in fact, a sealed book to me. Dr. Franklin graciously encouraged me without preaching didactically. Both from his actions and his words I derived lessons in these important ministerial duties which will remain with me as long as I have the strength to work.

Dr. Franklin himself was an indefatigable worker, frequently driving himself to the point of impairing his health. Countless calls upon his time and his energy came from all sections of the community. It did not take me long to discover that Dr. Franklin was ranked by Jews and non-Jews, by press, educators, and the public, as one of the most eminent of all the leaders in the spiritual and cultural life of that growing metropolis. He deserved that high opinion of the people. No man has ever more meticulously practiced the unequivocal code of rabbinical ethics nor more closely followed the religious idealism of Judaism than my patient colleague. Never once did he flaunt his enviable reputation;

never did he attempt to make me feel his superiority. The assumption of the role of dictator was so foreign to him, that it would never have occurred to him to give his assistant a mandatory order. Although he would often ask me to undertake specific tasks, as far as he could, he sought to arrange a definite routine of duties for me. Beyond doubt I am certain that he never questioned my full right of free speech and free action.

When I accepted the coveted invitation to become Dr. Franklin's assistant, I made no demands upon him and sought no agreements with him about rights or duties or privileges. I felt sincerely that mine was to be a rich opportunity for receiving experience under the guidance of a beloved and esteemed rabbi, known and respected throughout the land. I was sure that our relationship would be that of older and younger brother, both laboring with full capacity to bring faith and guidance to a community.

There was no mention of a contract. My ministry began and has continued with the congregations I have served on a moral basis of mutual confidence. I have never sought nor accepted a contract, because I have always felt that minister and people have the most wholesome relationship, when they agree verbally that they will remain together as long as it is mutually pleasant to do so. After all, a mere legal instrument cannot make a religious institution function as it should. A contract may protect a man in a position for a while, but if he hasn't the love and confidence of his people, he has become a servant working for his hire and his labors are futile. In reality, a contract would usually bind only the congregation; for if larger opportunities in

some other community should come to the rabbi, the congregation would unselfishly release him. I have never regretted my attitude upon this subject. I think it is right in principle.

Furthermore, I have made it an invariable practice never to make financial demands upon a congregation. Perhaps I have been very fortunate in that my congregations have been thoughtful and generous always. My conviction that our Reform Jewish congregations will unfailingly do all in their power to provide a decent standard of living and of security for their spiritual leader without haggling and urging, has been fully justified. I should feel like a crass materialist if, under any condition, I had to ask for or demand an increase in salary.

Just as there was no consideration of legal contract in my assistantship, so there was no intimation that the senior rabbi would adjust his own activities or share any established prerogatives with me. Without question Dr. Franklin had requested Beth-El to employ me on the basis that the flourishing congregation had grown so wide in its influence and so active in its numerous services, that no one man could possibly carry the weight of that burdensome work alone. There were duties which might be delegated and responsibilities which might be shared. It was on that inarticulate premise that I determined to begin my ministry as an assistant. I never imagined for a moment that I would have a claim upon the pulpit itself, or that arrangements would immediately be made by which I would alternate with Dr. Franklin in preaching on Sabbath and Sunday mornings. It would have been presumptuous for me to entertain any

such idea. Any young man entering a congregation as assistant is impertinent if he requests the older, wiser, abler man to share the precious pulpit privilege with him. The older man has earned his right through years of incalculable service. He has withstood the acid test of time. The younger man must labor and achieve before he has a right to occupy the pulpit, unless it be through the considerate desire of the senior minister to have him preach from time to time.

Dr. Franklin was insistent that I preach on alternate Sabbath mornings. When he preached, I read most of the service; when I preached, he conducted the ritual service. From time to time he would invite me, far in advance, to preach on a designated Sunday. When he was out of the city, except on rare occasions, he expected me to take complete charge of school and pulpit. As I look back now, I realize how blessed I was in having the authoritative supervision of such an able colleague and friend. Were it not for that I am positive that I must have failed woefully.

I remember how completely empty I felt, after preaching five times in the "supplementary services," held in the Unitarian Church, for the overflow crowd of Temple members on the first holydays. I had spent days and weeks during the preceding summer in the painful, exacting preparation of those sermons. When they were completed I was of the definite opinion that I had woven into them the total of my knowledge. Every iota of philosophy, history, literature, theology and science that I had ever studied seemed to be exhausted in that first holyday season. My elation over the rapturous and over-generous praise of my new friends was more than counterbalanced by the disturbing

realization that I was completely "preached out." I had shot my bolt. I was entirely devoid of other knowledge or other ideas.

In later years, of course, I found that other far abler men had undergone similar experience. It required several years of active hard work to teach me, what you will learn some day, that a man who applies himself diligently will find in the life around him and in the precious storehouse of Jewish lore and world literature an inexhaustible supply of ideas from which he may draw unceasing inspiration for himself and his people. Despite that fact the holydays, with their never-changing implications, still present the most arduous and frightening tasks of the whole year. Perhaps it is due to the wealth of themes they suggest and the difficulty of choosing the one that will be most beneficial to the people. Or perhaps the consciousness that on the "great" days many hundreds will flock to the services and may not participate again in a religious service for many weeks, oppresses me with the need of preaching so brilliantly, so effectively, that my desire transcends my capacity, and I experience a sense of futility.

In the early months of my ministry therefore I found it extremely difficult to preach. The hardship was intensified by the fact that all my sermons were delivered to the congregation with Dr. Franklin sitting on the pulpit behind me. That is almost equivalent to suggesting that all your sermons be delivered in the presence of Dr. Morgenstern or Dr. Cohon, Dr. Bettan or other members of this eminent faculty.

My colleague refrained from offering any suggestions to

me before the sermon was written; but he was absolutely frank with me after I had delivered it. He would point out its weaknesses and praise any merit he found. Once I suggested to him that I might preach better if he scanned my sermons before I delivered them. Without hesitation he refused and uttered a sentiment that has never left my mind: "If I correct or amend your sermon, it becomes partly mine. No man is big enough for you to imitate. Be yourself, your growing, developing self. Make mistakes but have sense enough to listen to honest constructive criticism, and you will correct your own mistakes or avoid them in the future." You will agree that the advice was sound; I have found it so in my own career.

Invariably my sermon theme came from the Torah portion or the Haphtarah, and to this day I follow that practice. It is amazing how year after year some new thought or some modern application may be extracted from the Sabbath portion or from the Midrash or commentary thereto. Even now I derive much more satisfaction from my Sabbath morning services than I do from my Sabbath evening services, except when I am using a biblical theme in the evening.

Invaluable experience was acquired in those early Detroit years through the necessity of writing every word that I preached, and writing so well that I could earn the commendation of my honored mentor. The practice was hard, but it was indispensable. My wife and I often laugh aloud when we recall the first three years of preaching endeavor. After writing the manuscript, carefully revising and correcting it, I would proceed to memorize it word for word. It was a laborious task, requiring hours of patient drudgery. I would

carry the manuscript with me during the week; on street cars or in my office I would go over and over it. On the Saturday or Sunday morning on which the sermon was to be delivered, we would get up at four o'clock; while my help-mate held the manuscript, I would recite it. If I missed a word in a paragraph my unyielding critic would insist that I repeat the entire paragraph. When it was fully memorized, I would jot down paragraph headings on a little card, which I took to the pulpit. I did this because of a burning, shameful remembrance, which will stay with me as long as I live, of my loss of the Jones Oratorical Contest at the University of Cincinnati, because, as the judges told me, in one place I hesitated too long. I forgot a paragraph, and when I began again, I picked out a place so far down in my speech that it didn't make sense. The use of paragraph headings has prevented that sort of thing happening again.

I do not propose that you follow the same cumbersome method that I used; and happily I can tell you that after the first five years of preaching I found it no longer necessary to memorize. Since then it has sufficed to write and then to read slowly three or four times. I can then repeat a large portion of the manuscript. But that facility has come because of the strenuous, mechanical preparation of the initial years.

Only the genius can preach effectively without painstaking preparation. We have only a few real geniuses and if you ask them, they will tell you that they prepare with utmost caution. Little reliance can be placed upon the arrogant boast of some that they never prepare a sermon, that they just preach "as the spirit moves them." Doubtlessly there are

some few men in our pulpits so endowed by God with exceptional abilities of mind and such vibrance of soul that they may be capable of delivering scintillating messages week after week with little or no exertion. However, I believe we may consider it axiomatic that the average rabbi is extremely unfair to himself and to his congregation, if he approaches his unique privilege of preaching without the most serious thought and the most earnest labor of which he is capable. A congregation may dislike a particular subject or disagree with the content of a theme; but if its delivery gives unmistakable evidence of honest preparation, it will gain respect for the man and his message. Slovenly pulpit work, on the other hand, is a preposterous imposition upon the good will and the patience of a congregation.

Some of my colleagues will jeer if I insist that the time factor is an important element in delivering a sermon. Some seem to think that the average worshiper is so constituted that he may attentively listen uninterruptedly for an hour or an hour and a half. Psychologically that is erroneous. Unless the scene is constantly shifting, unless variations of motif are frequently changing, the average well-educated, well-trained listener can give attention well for only about twenty or twenty-five minutes by actual laboratory tests. This does not apply to the classroom lecture, at which the conversational tone is correct or at which note-taking is required. But in the sanctuary the very atmosphere of worship enjoins complete quietude on the part of worshiper and unusual concentration; therefore the overly long sermon misses its potency. The preachers of several centuries ago felt that they had been unfair to their calling if they

failed to sermonize for at least several hours. That might have been logical in days of simple living, when the church or the synagogue was the only place in which the common man could obtain information and touch the periphery of erudition. In these days of marvelous radio, great colleges, good books and intelligent press, that type of thinking is anachronistic. Today, unless a subject is highly technical, requiring the citation of much data, or unless it has many phases impinging upon other important topics, it had best be given in less than half an hour.

To me the sermon is not an appendage to a religious service but an integral part of it. The prayers form the most important part of any worship, and the sermon, from my viewpoint, should focus upon one well chosen idea of spiritual or ethical significance, which will tend toward motivation of life or which will serve as a kind of religious pabulum during the week, if the congregants bring it to mind while engaged in their workaday affairs. The matchless orations of Moses could each have been given, as we have them, in less than half an hour. The brilliant sermons of the Prophets are significantly brief. The dedication address of Solomon adds to its wisdom by its brevity. Spanning the ages, we note that the thrilling masterpieces of the great men who have influenced humanity have almost all been short. The gem of all modern ones, in my opinion, is Lincoln's Gettysburg address, which requires only three or four minutes to be repeated stirringly.

Such thoughts have convinced me throughout the years of my work that if my sermon extends to forty or fifty minutes, I have been guilty of careless preparation; if it demands

only thirty minutes, I have definitely improved; if it requires only twenty minutes, I feel I have given the best preparation of which I am capable. To any colleague, who may take umbrage at this rather uncompromising statement, I offer the challenging suggestion that, if he will subject his manuscript to honest, relentless scrutiny, delete all the verbosity, eliminate all repetitiousness and erase all redundancy, remove all elements not germane to his main theme, the quotations in several languages which neither he nor his audience will remember, he will discover that he will have a more potent, a more effective discourse just because it comes within the reasonable bounds of brevity. I accept Shakespeare's pungent line: "Brevity is the soul of wit."

Achievements in Detroit were transitory and insignificant. No accomplishment of mine had a lasting effect upon the Jewish or non-Jewish community. My endeavors were confined largely to the work with the pupils of the Religious School and the groups of young people. In addition, the "Bishop" and I felt that Beth-El should promote and foster Judaism in the smaller communities of Michigan. Accordingly it was arranged that I would preach twice a month in Saginaw and also teach the few children there to prepare them for Confirmation. Some of my most pleasant recollections center around the cultured folk of that good city.

In attempting to organize congregations and religious schools my experience as an upper-classman of the Hebrew Union College stood me in good stead. In my junior and senior years I received the fortunate appointment to serve as student-rabbi in the fine congregation at Huntington,

West Virginia. Through the years some of our most capable students have been assigned to that important pulpit. By leaving Cincinnati on the C. & O. at noon, I reached Huntington in sufficient time to don my prized Prince Albert suit, dine with some member and reach the Temple in time to meditate briefly before entering upon the grueling task of conducting the service and delivering the sermon. The congregation was generous; although I had not yet received my rabbinical degree, it immediately bestowed upon me the coveted title of "Doctor."

One Sabbath while in the midst of an impassioned sermon, an episode occurred which has its especial niche in my memory. That night my sermon theme centered around Nadab and Abihu. I recited my text, "And they offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them." No sooner were the words out of my mouth than we were greeted with a roaring blast of flame and billowing smoke issuing from the front and rear hot-air registers. Something had happened to the natural gas furnace. The sermon was never finished; the congregation departed hastily, accompanied by rabbi and choir. Fortunately only minor damage was done. This episode takes me back in the same vein to my early youth when, during a service on a stormy night at Goldsboro, my father read the response, "Light is sown for the righteous and joy for the upright in heart," when every light in the Temple went out. The service continued by candle light amid the suppressed chuckles of the congregants who caught the implication.

On Sabbath morning the children of the Huntington community met me for class instruction and service. In that one

little group I found one young man whom I inducted into a course of study, which led him to enter the college and ultimately to graduate. He was the first student I started upon a rabbinical career. There were two others in my later ministry, Abraham Shusterman and Abraham D. Shaw, both of whom have attained notable status among their colleagues. Some hours were spent on Saturday afternoons visiting the ill and the aged.

Early Sunday morning I would catch an interurban and reach Ashland, Kentucky, in time to meet about twenty children of all ages for service and instruction. Our meetings during those years were held in a large hall above a store. The parents attended a service on Sunday afternoons. From that small beginning we evolved a congregation which, in the passing years, has grown considerably and several years ago erected a goodly house of worship, which I had the privilege of dedicating. Sunday evenings I spent at Ironton, Ohio, where I had formed a tiny congregation, which met in the small auditorium of the Public Library.

Getting back to class at the college on Monday afternoons presented a problem. I would spend the night at a hotel, the like of which can now be found only in the outermost reaches of the world. It was a dilapidated wooden building, heated by individual gas stoves. The fire escape consisted of a coiled rope, conveniently tied to a ring imbedded in the wooden floor. Fearing asphyxiation if I allowed the stove to burn so that the room might be warm when I had to arise at 3:00 A. M. to make train connections, I would turn off the gas and open the window. Even now I shiver when I recall the icy cold of those winter mornings. In the bleak dawn

I would dress as rapidly as possible and rush from the hotel down to the river to a ferryboat scheduled to meet a train on the other side of the Ohio at Russell, Kentucky. Often the ferry had difficulty in making the crossing on account of the huge blocks of ice.

In spite of these slight hardships, tri-state preaching in my student days proved enormously valuable in the outstate congregational work that I sought to do for Congregation Beth-El in Detroit. To those activities may be traced the beginnings of congregations in Flint, Michigan, and in Jackson. Outstanding in the work of Dr. Franklin was the Jewish student Congregation organized by him at the University of Michigan. It was with a sense of pride that I served that group, with the encouragement of its founder.

While engaged in these manifold activities early in 1918, I became extremely restless over the fact that so many young men were being called to the colors to wage the war against Germany. The inner urge became irresistible, and I sought a place in the army as a chaplain. I suffered acutely when my application was rejected; and though I labored energetically as a speaker in the sale of Liberty bonds throughout the state, nonetheless I felt wretched over the idea that I was secure while so many men of my age were patriotically facing death.

At this time I literally threw myself into the work of B'nai Brith. My father had been a valiant member for many years, and I absorbed from him that keen interest in this noble organization which is still with me. It is possible that I devoted so much time and energy to the beneficent work of the Order, because it gave me a wide opportunity to work

with a cross-section of Detroit Jewry. In a short while, I became president of what was then moribund Pisgah Lodge, but which, during the year of my administration, largely due to the great assistance of Beth-El's younger members, led by Milton M. Alexander, became the largest and most active group in the entire order. My labors in Detroit undoubtedly led to my election as President of District No. 2 some years after my call to Dayton, Ohio. Through associations found in B'nai Brith work, I know that many men in the communities I have served have affiliated with my congregations.

During my third and last year as assistant rabbi of Beth-El, I was fascinated by the elaborate plans which were being developed for a new Temple by the world-renowned architect, Albert Kahn, then a member of the Congregational Board. The membership of the Temple had grown so rapidly that its then still comparatively new building lacked capacity to meet the diverse needs. At that time I modestly suggested to Rabbi Franklin that, instead of erecting a new, costly and commodious building, he urge the congregation to employ at least four more assistants, who would be assigned to strategic points in various sections of the expanding city, and let them build branches of Beth-El in neighborhoods where large numbers of Jews lived. It was my idea that any member, joining a branch of the Temple, would automatically become a member of the central body with all rights and prerogatives enjoyed by the members of the parent group. I still feel that the suggestion had some merit and might have solved the Reform problem. It remained only a suggestion.

Some months later a committee, headed by one of the outstanding younger leaders of the city, came to me with a plan that was enthusiastically and hopefully laid before me. Said the chairman in substance: "We represent several hundred families in Detroit, who want to create a new Reform congregation. If you become our leader and rabbi, we can reach that objective speedily and surely. Detroit is too large and is growing too rapidly to be served by only one Temple. Its membership is already unwieldy, and its very size obliterates the fellowship and the unity which should exist in a religious brotherhood." The committee was insistent that I leave my assistantship at once and accept the rabbinate of the congregation to be built around me. I am confident that had I agreed to the proposal, a large and dynamic congregation could have been created within a few months. Certainly the situation was ripe and the need was great.

However, a moral problem faced me; only one answer was possible for me. I immediately declined the offer on the ground that I would be displaying rank disloyalty and ingratitude to Temple Beth-El and its esteemed rabbi. Any prestige that I might have, any achievement I had made, could be traced solely to the fact that I was associated with Dr. Franklin and Beth-El. In spite of the apparent need for another Reform Temple in Detroit, it would appear that, after accepting all the opportunities Beth-El had given me, I would now in a certain sense be deserting it and entering into direct competition with it. Under the circumstances I felt that my declination should be unmistakably clear and final. I have never regretted that decision, though I realized

then and know positively now that Detroit should have three or four Reform congregations, strategically placed in its huge territory amidst its ever growing Jewish community.

In the summer of 1920 I received a cherished letter from Mr. Harry Lehman, president of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun of Dayton, Ohio, inviting me to accept the pulpit made vacant by Dr. David Lefkowitz, who had recently been installed as rabbi in Dallas, Texas. The letter stated that, unknown to me, a committee had visited Detroit and had carefully examined my record there. It was agreed that I could take sufficient time to think over this important matter. Prayerfully I considered this call from every possible angle.

Naturally I knew what eminent status Dr. Lefkowitz had attained in Dayton during the twenty years of his powerful ministry there. His influence had radiated brilliantly through the state and nation. Frankly, I recognized so many deficiencies in my own abilities that I feared that I should be unable, even by most earnest application, to maintain the high standards he had set. On the other hand, I knew that his status, so meritorious, so praiseworthy, would be a constant challenge and inspiration to me. Having examined this situation thoroughly, my wife and I determined that we should make no final decision until we had received the valued judgment of Dr. Franklin. When we laid the matter before him, he immediately answered that we had been highly honored by the call to Dayton, that he had known for some time that it would be extended, that the committee had visited him and that he had given me his un-

qualified recommendation. He felt that the time had come when I must enter upon an independent ministry and assume the full responsibility of congregational leadership. Upon such assurances, I accepted the Dayton call with gratitude, but requested B'nai Jeshurun to permit me to remain in Detroit in order to assist Dr. Franklin with the High Holyday services. A substitute for me would have been very difficult to find at that late hour.

Leaving Detroit was no easy matter. The folk of Beth-El and the wide community had been gracious beyond all estimate. Many friends had reciprocated the affection we gave them. It was really a case of pulling up roots and stakes. Above all, I found it difficult to sever relationship with Dr. Franklin. During the three precious years I was privileged to be with him, we had never had an altercation, never a moment of strained feeling. Unconsciously we had proved that two rabbis, working together as comrades and friends, can have the joy of fellowship when mutual confidence, respect and affection prevail. Of course there were many hot discussions, vigorous conferences and violent disagreements, but never malice or ill-will. Once a question was decided, both of us abided by the decision unswervingly. Under every circumstance Dr. Franklin was fair. I know that while I was with him I was never the victim of injustice or ill-will. To me Dr. Franklin will always be the exemplar of the cultured gentleman, the valiant champion of Jewish idealism. I am grateful that he accepted my invitation, extended by B'nai Jeshurun, to install me as rabbi in Dayton on Succoth, 1920.

Dayton even then held a fond place in my heart. It was

there, during my student days at H.U.C., that I had attended the annual meeting of the Jewish Religious Education Association of Ohio. Oh, memorable convention! It was in the course of an evening session, which both of us should have been attending as accredited delegates, that Gertrude and I slipped away for a stroll in a nearby park, where we stayed sufficiently long for me to propose to her. In later years we often revisited that beautiful spot in which we had plighted our troth.

In 1913, several years after our engagement, I had a different kind of experience in Dayton. In March of that year the community was visited by a devastating flood. The Red Cross of Cincinnati called upon college and university students to help in the catastrophic ordeal, bringing hunger and disease to the courageous people of Dayton. With three other H.U.C. men, Edward L. Israel, Jack H. Skirball and Elkan C. Voorsanger, I volunteered. The next day we were assigned to escort three freight cars, loaded with prepared box luncheons given by the Women's Exchange of Cincinnati. It was our duty to guard the cars so that they would not be shunted onto a siding or be stopped en route by other smaller communities in the afflicted area. Only one railroad, the C. L. and N., was open all the way through, and we soon discovered that trestles were out and strips of road bed had been washed away.

We pulled out of the station late one afternoon, and it required seventeen hours to make the trip of fifty-four miles. En route we helped the crew repair temporary bridges and build wobbly crossings over the washouts. At a way station, true to our trust, we braved the anger of the Division Super-

intendent by our repeated insistence that he provide without delay a good engine to replace the one that had broken down. At dawn, as we rode in the doorway of a box-car, we barely escaped the rifle fire of militiamen, stationed along the right-of-way to prevent vagrants from entering Dayton. We must have looked like hoboes to them after our heavy work and sleepless vigil of the night. In due time the train crept onto a siding at the National Cash Register Co. and there we triumphantly presented the bills-of-lading to Mr. John Patterson. Seven years later, when I recalled the episode to him, he remembered it distinctly and added that the food, distributed in rowboats his company had hastily built, had materially helped thousands who were marooned in their attics or on their roofs. Though I had never dreamed that I might some day live in Dayton, I had held the citizenry in high regard because of its valor and because of the intelligent fashion with which the people dug out of the mire and had turned evil into good, building a better, a finer community out of the wreck of the old.

Through the years individuals would relate their flood experiences to me. One elderly lady informed me that she and her numerous progeny had never prayed so hard and so fast in their lives. As they watched the water rising rapidly on the first floor, with the piano and furniture floating crazily about the rooms, they took refuge on the second floor. Soon the water covered that floor, and in desperation, they punched a hole in the shingled roof. They squeezed through and sat precariously upon the roof. During the long and desperate wait for rescue, they made many vows, among them the sincere promise that, if they emerged from that

danger safely, they would never permit anything to interfere with their Temple attendance. They prided themselves on the scrupulous keeping of that vow. I often regretted that many others had not made a similar one!

Almost immediately we felt at home in Dayton. The people were hospitable and considerate, though many of them, after the reception held for us at the conclusion of the installation service, attended by hundreds, expected us to remember their names. We discovered that in the community there were three large families with many branches. As an expedient, when we failed to recall any particular name we would unhesitatingly use one of the names of those families. Nine times out of ten we were right. Do not think for a moment that this is trivial. Remembering names is tremendously important. A name is a person's most unique possession; and if he has the slightest degree of vanity, he likes to hear it pronounced correctly by a tongue he admires. The man in public life, who concentrates upon the art of remembering names, will find it helpful in his work. One may develop his own system. Certainly he should endeavor to formulate a method by which he can instantly recall a large proportion of the thousands of people he will meet in his own congregation and in the general community. It is hardly necessary to insinuate that the rabbi should know and call by name every child in his religious school, even if the enrollment is nearly four hundred as it is in the case of mine. Be patient, when a person you have met in a crowd and whose name you have barely heard muttered, coyly says to you, "You remember me, don't you?" If you are impatient you will answer gruffly: "Why should I re-

member you?" But if you are patient and tactful, you will say sweetly: "My poor memory tricks me again; I don't see how I could forget anyone so lovely." Then you have made a friend for life!

The jubilation encompassing my spirit, as I began my difficult work in my new home, was mixed with anxiety. I had stepped into a well integrated congregation, led until only a few brief months before by one of the most lovable and one of the ablest men in the American Jewish pulpit. He had endeared himself by his remarkable personality to Jew and Christian alike. His ability and his unceasing labors had given him an incomparable leadership, which he bore with innate modesty. Wherever I went and whatever the occasion, I would hear encomiums deservedly heaped upon him. In those first trying months I could easily have developed an inferiority complex, or I could have succumbed to an unworthy feeling of jealousy. Fortunately my unwavering faith in God prevented either. I simply reached the conclusion that such evidence of loyalty to a good man, who had nobly served, was justly manifest in the continuous paeans showered upon him; if I did my honest best at all times, I too might, under the will of God, find a like place of love and confidence in the hearts of my new friends. I could never hope, nor did I desire, to displace Dr. Lefkowitz in the hearts and the minds of his friends; I simply wanted to nestle beside him in their hearts and to strive with might and main to attain a telling leadership, which would, in some way, approximate his. Therefore I attempted no revolutionary program in Dayton. My predecessor had left his house in good order; it needed no new broom to sweep it

clean! I proceeded cautiously, acquainting myself with congregational activities as they then existed, encouraging and strengthening them wherever possible. The Board of Directors accepted the curriculum which I had produced in Detroit and which, with some adjustments, could be used advantageously for our school children.

Two young people's groups were organized and a Men's Temple Club formed. The people of B'nai Jeshurun were very co-operative, attending services with regularity and participating in all congregational and affiliated activities with enthusiasm. I sincerely believe that no rabbi has ever led a finer group.

During the first year of my life in Dayton, I rarely accepted an engagement to address an outside group. I felt it necessary to devote the major portion of my time and energy to my own especial flock within the larger community. For a while I refused to accept appointments to boards of various civic, philanthropic and cultural groups. I have always had a definite conviction that the rabbi must consider one of his primary tasks the building of lay leadership, so that, when necessity demands Jewish representation upon community boards, he may suggest some man or woman equipped for that kind of responsibility. It will be well for you young men, soon to enter the ministry, to consider this carefully. You will each take your place in a community formerly occupied by a recognized leader, and you will be asked to assume some of the responsibilities he carried. Accept such invitations warily. Attendance at too many board and committee meetings dissipates valuable time, which might be more advantageously devoted by the rabbi to those

highly specialized tasks which only he is equipped to perform in his community. Of course there are some agencies which have a right to require the rabbi's aid and leadership, but, excepting those, the rabbi should always be encouraging and preparing his lay-folk to assume social and congregational responsibilities. I lay great emphasis upon this because I would have you avoid the mistake of overloading, which I find myself recurrently making.

One task which I insisted must be met by my Brotherhood and Sisterhood was that created by the infrequent cases of juvenile delinquency. From my activities in Detroit I had learned how important a helping hand and a kindly word can be to a boy or a girl in trouble. Too many of our congregations serve only the comfortable and the secure. Sometimes the poor, the afflicted, the desolate are woefully neglected. The rabbi must ever be on the alert to assist the unfortunate ones who get into various difficulties. In Detroit many hours of my time were spent in Juvenile Court, and from time to time boys and girls were paroled to me. Invariably I found it easy to procure help from reliable adults, who were glad to assume some of the responsibility of supervision in specific cases.

It seems that some portion of such work has fallen to me in every community I have served. Even now I expect each year to have an average of three or four men paroled to me from some prison or court. It is very necessary for the parolee to have a steady job and some one to whom he can go for a word of advice or friendship. One of the glaring faults of modern society is found in its disgraceful neglect of men and women who run afoul of the law and who, after finish-

ing their sentences, are thrown back into society without the guidance and encouragement they need to rehabilitate themselves. No wonder there are so many recidivists. Society spends countless millions each year in apprehending and incarcerating criminals but only a pittance for their redemption and reconstruction after they have served their time. In well developed communities with organized social agencies, like my present city, the rabbi is relieved of much of the mechanical procedure incurred in work with delinquents or prisoners. But the rabbi has the approach to the desolate that no lay worker can usually have; it is the spiritual approach which instils new confidence, new hope and new life.

I implore you, wherever you minister, not to ignore nor neglect these offenders of society who, under loving care and interest, may take a wholesome place in life. Though I advocate your interest in this important phase of rabbinical work which may be yours, I hope you will be spared any experience similar to one I encountered ten years ago in my present community. Three young men, one Jewish, had rented a car from a drive-it-yourself company, and had given their names and addresses. After hours of aimless driving they decided to hold up a drug store. Joe sat in the car a half block away while the other two entered the store and robbed it. They ran toward the car; as they were about to enter it, a policeman came to question them. Immediately one of the men shot the officer. Before he died, a few hours later, he gave the license number of the car to fellow-officers who found him. The names and addresses of the men were procured from the car rental company and they were arrested without delay. While awaiting trial one of the men, after

confessing to the prosecutor that he had done the actual shooting, committed suicide in jail by drinking a bucket of lye water. Another was permitted by the prosecutor to turn state's evidence with the promise that he would receive a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Joe was not permitted to enter a plea of guilty to the charge of murder in the first degree as an accessory before and after the fact. He was made to stand trial, was convicted, and at once sentenced to be hanged.

In criminal cases it is invariably my attitude that, if a Jewish man commits a crime, he should be tried and, if convicted, should be punished like any other. I fight vehemently against some maudlin Jews who seem to think that, as soon as a Jew has been embroiled with the law, the whole Jewish community should rush to his rescue, bringing pressure through influence to procure a minimal sentence or parole. It is my private conviction that when a Jew is found guilty of a crime, he should be doubly punished, once as an individual guilty of an anti-social act and once because he has brought disgrace upon the Jewish community. In every case, however, I am insistent that whatever the circumstances, the culprit shall have able counsel and a fair trial. In the case I cite, I definitely felt Joe had had neither. Good counsel was procured and the expensive appeal was undertaken. After months of weary waiting, the appeal was denied.

The case held much interest for me and I decided I would go deeply into Joe's background. It was found that Joe was the son of a respectable immigrant family. His mother had died when he was ten years old. His father worked hard,

early and late, to provide the family with a bare subsistence. He saw his daughters and Joe, the youngest child, only in the morning and late at night. The older girl had been keeping house since she was fifteen. Frequently Joe was truant and when about eleven was kept for a while in the juvenile detention home. He was repeatedly arrested for petty thievery and was sentenced three or four times to the reform school, where he was thrown into intimate contact with older and more vicious young criminals. He emerged hardened and hating everything social. No agency reached out for him. No one tried to get him out of the slum district, to which he returned upon release, nor away from the unwholesome companionship which held sway over him. An independent psychiatrist, who examined the young man for me, told me he barely reached the I.Q. of a low grade moron. In the early days of delinquency something might have been done for the lad to give him a trade or at least to get him out of harm's way. Nothing was done. Petty crime had followed petty crime, punishment had followed punishment; and now, a victim of his own wickedness and society's neglect, Joe faced the gallows.

As a last resort I visited the Governor of Missouri and pleaded with him for a commutation of sentence from death to life imprisonment. The Governor was extremely courteous and gracious. He listened attentively to my indictment of capital punishment in general and to my specific plea for commutation. Then quietly, in a tone of real sorrow, he told me that, if the slain man had been a civilian, he would have been moved to grant my plea; but the victim was a police officer. Public clamor would rise; enforcement officers

throughout the state would condemn commutation, and it might encourage other criminals to slay policemen. On these grounds and on the basis that he was certain the State Board of Review would refuse to sustain his desire to commute the sentence, he reluctantly refused my petition.

The date for execution was set and it was to be carried out in our old county jail. At that time legislation had not been passed to locate executions in the State Penitentiary in our capital city. The sheriff called me one day and said that Joe was begging tearfully to see me. Of course I visited him. He seemed reconciled to the fact that everything possible had been done for him, and he besought me to be with him the night of the execution. In the interim I visited him occasionally. At his request I brought him a prayerbook and a Bible. They seemed to intrigue him. He would avidly ask questions about words he had marked and couldn't understand.

The night of execution arrived, a cold, blustering, awesome night. I reached Joe's cell at midnight, and at his urging I spent hours in prayer with him. To pass some of the slow, creeping hours, we played all sorts of silly card games, cracked jokes with the jailor and, to keep our minds off the impending disaster, ate the sumptuous meal the county provides for criminals just before their death. At 5:30 A. M. the deputy sheriffs came with the "harness," which was speedily applied to his body. Joe went through this ordeal without a quiver. He seemed to have no fear of death. We proceeded through a narrow hallway which led to the scaffold. The subdued roar of three hundred morbid onlookers, who had flocked to see the "show," was hushed.

With steady step Joe stepped upon the scaffold. When asked if he wanted to make a statement, he looked full into the face of the crowd and said without emotion: "I have never killed nor tried to kill a man." The black hood was placed over his head and face and the noose expertly adjusted about his neck. His arms were strapped close to his body. Realizing that the moment of death was very near Joe said: "Wait just a minute, Sheriff, I want the rabbi to recite the 'Sh'ma' with me." Together we spoke those hallowed words in Hebrew and in English. "I am ready now, Sheriff. Good-bye, Rabbi." "Good-bye, Joe," I replied in grief-stricken voice.

The trap was sprung. His neck was broken; he strangled slowly to death. His crimes, according to the state, were expiated. The morbid lust of the mob was satiated. I buried him the same afternoon in an unfinished wooden coffin beside the fence in an orthodox cemetery. The anguished face of his hardworking, poor, old father still lingers tortuously in my memory. *The Kansas City Star* asked me for an article, which it carried prominently the next day. It expresses my attitude upon capital punishment and I quote it:

"Joe Hershon has been hanged by the neck and is dead and buried. Society has collected its due; the crime is expiated; the widow of the slain officer is now completely contented; her vengeance is fully satisfied, and the state moves on in smug consciousness that her laws have been vindicated.

"When I heard the trap door this morning and saw a hopeless moron blasted into eternity, I seemed to catch the muffled tones of the toms-toms and to see savages in the

jungle dancing about their tribal enemies. For it appears almost inconceivable that a society which accounts itself civilized can still indulge in the aborigine custom of putting its transgressors to death.

"These thoughts coursed through my mind also during the awful six hours of the death vigil, when we did our utmost to take the condemned one's mind off his speedily approaching doom.

"Frankly I dreaded the ordeal of being with Hershon, but I was impelled to the performance of an obvious duty by the thought that, if any word of mine could bring him even an atom of comfort, or if any prayer of mine could help him across to the Unknown to face his Maker, it was my bounden, human and spiritual obligation to be with him.

"Of course I felt that one, whose life had been wasted and wrecked in criminal pursuits, would find it impossible in a brief instant to experience a regeneration of the spirit or a reformation of the character. Joe himself realized that and expressed the sentiment that, if he had applied the precepts and ideals of religion to his own life, he would not now have been in this wretched plight.

"He seemed especially grateful that the hope of life beyond the grave was held out to him. He was impressed by the belief in a compassionate, gracious and loving God, who might forgive him and redeem his soul.

"I have no doubt that in those dreadful and cruel hours, until the very moment he was strangled to death, he was sustained by the fundamentals of faith. The ideas had to be expressed to him very simply, because his intelligence was obviously narrowly limited. With his childlike mind, he

eagerly grasped any ray of hope, and his unusual calm and composure was the result. If Hershon's mind had been tested by men who are qualified to do so, I am certain that he would have been rated as a psychopath and certainly not above a low grade moron. This was especially noticeable last night, when we rapidly passed from one game to another, from subject to subject, resorting to any subterfuge to prevent a possible break in his stoicism. I noted the high degree of what psychologists call 'susceptibility to suggestion'; and I was convinced that a dominating mind, exercised by a mental superior, could have made him commit almost any kind of crime.

"Some day our legal agencies will reckon with this kind of mind and instead of calling it criminal will term it "psychopathic," and will handle it in the clinic and not only on the gallows.

"Hershon's crime cannot be condoned, and I have no maudlin sympathy for him; but I cannot feel that one who spent his last hours repeatedly regretting the disgrace and sorrow he had brought to his father and sisters, was totally bad. I am sure that somewhere within him was a tiny spark of good, which might have been developed into a dazzling light, if society had met his problems with intelligence.

"Coming to this country from abroad at the age of three, shortly thereafter losing his mother, and from early youth becoming a street urchin, it is small wonder that he selected bad companions with whom he practiced crime.

"Since witnessing Hershon's death by hanging, I am more firmly convinced than ever that capital punishment solves no social problems. I am certain that Wardens Lewis Lawes

of Sing Sing and Osborne of Ohio are indisputably right when they prove, by statistics gathered over many years, that capital punishment does not in the slightest degree deter crime. Significantly, eminent sociologists also maintain this identical viewpoint, insisting that those states having capital punishment have more major crimes per 100,000 of population, than those states which have life imprisonment as the maximum penalty.

"I have often wondered why states, practicing capital punishment on the theory that it frightens potential criminals, insist on having the execution in the privacy of jail buildings, to which only the exclusive morbid may be invited. If hanging criminals is logically sound on the premise that it prevents similar crimes, then the state ought to hold its hangings on the capitol steps or on the courthouse lawns, so that thousands might witness the execution with all its appalling cruelty and meditate on the horrible penalty which awaits the criminal act. If the advocates of the death penalty were sincere in their belief that it deters crime, they would insist upon this.

"The truth of the matter is, no kind of penalty will ever eradicate or minimize crime! There are too many other factors to consider. Broken homes, handicapped and underprivileged childhood, social disease making for impaired mentality, unfair economic burdens, with their maladjustments in almost every phase of social life, must be remedied.

"Before judging the enemy of society, the state must judge its own imperfections. But even in an imperfect social order I believe that crime can be held in check, not by the severity of the penalty, but by the speed and certainty with

which justice is rendered. Let society rid itself of corrupt police departments, public officials, and conniving politicians; let men of courage and ability be elected to our benches; let the legal procedure be rid of all the technicalities by which testimony is hidden or perverted or delays are manufactured; in brief, establish a swiftly moving machinery of justice in America and the criminal will surrender to society.

"Capital punishment should be discarded, because it lowers the standards of modern civilization and degrades it to the level of the criminal, and because it is futile in deterring crime."

My interest in underprivileged children led to my appointment by a Judge of the Superior Court in Dayton to a place on a five-man board, the duty of which was to erect a home for the orphaned children of Montgomery County. Nearly \$2,000,000 had been voted by the people of the county for that purpose. Though I knew orphanages were becoming sociologically obsolete, I recognized the value of the contemplated building as a temporary place in which children could be housed until suitable foster homes under good supervision could be found for them. It required more than a year of conscientious planning, with commission meetings week after week, to complete this essential work. Well built, commodious and pleasant cottages were erected with central heating plant and individual dining-rooms and recreation rooms. Eighteen years after erection, those buildings have held up admirably and serve their need efficiently.

I gained much valuable experience in the hard work of the commission. I learned how hard it really is for men, chosen

to execute public responsibility, to do their work well and honestly. No sooner was my name published as a member of the Commission than my telephone began to ring and my mail increased manifold. It seemed that half the population in the county had a member of the family or a friend who would be just the right architect for the job; or dozens had just the suitable site we ought to choose for the location of the building; or certain contractors would be best qualified to procure the best materials and workers. In spite of the fact that I had announced in the press that I would insist that all meetings of the Commission be open to the public and that contracts would be open to public perusal, all of which was later ratified by the Commission, I was beset by messages or visits from friends, urging me to use my influence in behalf of some individual. This happened so frequently that I determined to find what plan had been used to interest my friend to the extent of visiting me in behalf of any person. I found that the seeker of the favor had a friend who had a friend who knew a friend that knew my friend, who might be willing to approach me to intercede with me. Since that time I have held the definite opinion that it is wrong for men of influence to bring pressure upon men charged with public duties, unless, of course, some principle is at stake or some public policy must be set. Influence, carelessly used, is responsible for much inefficiency and waste in public life.

Notwithstanding my desire to refuse executive positions in various communal organizations in Dayton, I sometimes found I could not escape. The one I remember most vividly was the presidency of the Montgomery County Chapter of

the American Red Cross. Though the work of the Annual Roll Call and emergency campaigns was difficult, I enjoyed my tasks and felt it a great privilege to be engaged in such essential enterprises.

However, one activity bears painful recollections, which I pass on to you as a sincere warning. Several years after entering my work in Dayton, I was asked to join a group of eminent men and women in creating an organization to be known as the Ohio Society for the Welfare of the Mentally Ill. Its purpose was to encourage the state to take better care of the insane in its institutions, located in different parts of the state. One of the largest asylums was in Dayton. Acquaintance with conditions there was intimate, for my wife and I had been conducting Saturday afternoon services there for many months. Jewish and non-Jewish patients who were not in "disturbed" condition were permitted to attend. They apparently procured some serenity and pleasure from the ritual services and the music of the volunteer choir directed by my wife. Refreshments were served by members of the Temple Sisterhood, after which we chatted with the patients or walked through the spacious grounds with them.

From some, who were inmates because of some minor fixation, we gathered some information about the actual conditions of the institution. We learned that the patients were invariably treated humanely, but we heard on every hand that there were never enough nurses, doctors, or attendants for any ward. The Superintendent himself corroborated this information and bemoaned the fact that, as soon as one of his underpaid nurses or doctors became especially proficient, some other institution or private agency

would employ them at double or triple salary, with the result that his institution was undermanned or improperly manned. With this information, I thought it was my duty to foster a movement which would improve conditions throughout the state and which might introduce recently discovered therapies, by which curable patients might be skilfully treated and in time be restored to their families. Accordingly I took pleasure in the efforts of the organization to enlist statewide interest of the public in our worthy cause. To achieve our objective money must be raised. A campaign was quietly conducted and goodly sums were obtained.

As years went by, the organization, which had done a meritorious work, began to take the easy way of raising its funds. Instead of having a broad base of popular subscriptions, it selected, through the personnel on the board, a few wealthy individuals from whom generous gifts could always be expected. Then the "depression" began. It seemed to hit Dayton in the early part of 1928, before the rest of the country realized that the prosperity bubble was about to burst. The wealthy men on the board felt that it would be unwise to conduct a campaign, and they volunteered to finance the Welfare Society for a few months. Just three months before I left Dayton to enter my new ministry in Kansas City, a group of three officials came to my study and informed me that negotiations had been made with a bank, by which the Society could borrow \$10,000 to carry on its work during the depression, provided all the members of the Board signed the note.

I demurred on the basis that I would soon be leaving Dayton and I felt I could not properly be expected to assume

such an obligation. They countered by saying that a very wealthy woman on the board had promised that, if the note could not be met or renewed, she would pay it all. They were positive that the bank would not provide the funds unless all members signed. Against my better judgment I signed. It was a costly signature. I should have known better and not have permitted my emotions to sway me in this case. I had been victimized too often before, when I was forced to pay notes which I had signed for individuals, who needed just a hundred dollars or two to stay in business or provide tuition for a boy at college or to give the wife a necessary operation. Yes, I should have known better.

Five years after I had left Dayton, I was informed by an attorney that the \$10,000 note had been transferred with the remnants of the bank to an agency of the United States, and the amount must be paid without delay. At the same time one of the wealthy co-signers wrote me, expressing regret at the turn of events. He gave me the distressing news that in the interim three signers had died, including the good woman who had promised to pay the whole sum; five or six others were completely insolvent, and only four of us possessed wealth or received salaries. The only honorable thing to do was to assume just proportions commensurate with our ability to pay. By agreement, arranged through my good friends, Butler Dismen and Sidney G. Kusworm, I was permitted to discharge my obligation by the payment of five hundred dollars. It was an expensive lesson; only one in a series that on other occasions, later and unavoidably, brought me great hardship. Because I know that a minister cannot give his best service of mind and heart to his congregation and com-

munity if he is constantly confronted by anxiety, which must come from oppressive debts and heavy financial difficulties, I venture to suggest to you that, before you accept positions on any boards, however useful and important they appear to be, you ascertain the extent of financial responsibility you assume directly or indirectly.

Some of the most precious memories I have are those which come from my relationship with the ministers and priests of Dayton. Though the Ministerial Alliance was confined to Protestant ministers, I was annually invited to address the membership. No communal endeavor was undertaken by the Alliance without extending me an invitation to share in it. The Christian ministers and I had a true comradeship, which was based upon mutual esteem and mutual appreciation. To me it is self-evident that such association must bring a spirit of understanding and fellowship, which in turn will minimize bigotry and prejudice. This was demonstrated in a very practical fashion in an episode which temporarily brought me mental anguish.

A new minister had just come to the city to substitute for one of the outstanding older men, who had left for the west to spend a few months in rest and recuperation. The second Sunday night the stranger occupied that honored pulpit, he spoke in scurrilous terms of Jews. He accused them of being unpatriotic and stated that all bootleggers were Jews. He betrayed his poor mentality farther by endorsing the articles then running in Ford's *Dearborn Independent* under the caption, "The International Jew," articles for which, you remember, Ford later abjectly apologized and for which he tried to atone by the abrupt abolition of his unjust publica-

tion. After services, in spite of many protests made by honest and clear thinking people in his audience, the minister took his manuscript to the night editor of the morning paper, and that gentleman, slightly in his cups, as we later learned, spread the whole disgusting diatribe all over the front page.

When I read it early in the morning, I called F. J. Ach, the president of my congregation, and by appointment we visited the publisher, who served also as editor-in-chief. We did not have to protest to him. He greeted us with profound apologies and we knew by his words and demeanor that he felt a deep sense of humiliation in the situation. He told us that he had written a formal note to the night editor dismissing him from his post. Immediately, we pleaded with him to rescind his action on the basis that any one might make a regrettable mistake. It took the better part of an hour to gain his promise that the man would be retained on probation. The next morning the paper carried a boxed, two-column editorial on the front page, denouncing the demagogue and his nefarious falsehoods and bemoaning the fact that the paper had been besmirched by carrying such obscenity and untruth in its columns.

The same week-end the *Dearborn Independent* carried a leading article on the subject with the caption: "Rabbi Makes Dayton Editor Crawl." It was accompanied by a completely false account of the whole incident. The article carried a distorted picture of me. I had been made to look like a cross between a pirate and a hyena. While I know I shall never be a candidate for a beauty contest, I am sure that I had just cause to feel I had been libeled, because no human being could look that way and live.

Upon the editor's urging, I decided that I would answer the calumnies on the next Friday night. Under the text, "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do," I traced rapidly and succinctly the essential contributions of the Jew to America in war and peace. I kept my temper throughout, impugned no motives, called no names. Falsehood was answered with truth and truth triumphed, as it must always. It is noteworthy that the minister remained in Dayton only a few weeks; the members of that church shunned him and his services. I was cheered during that disturbing episode when no less than twenty Christian ministers called to express their dismay and displeasure over the unwarranted incident.

By contrast I relate to you one of the happiest circumstances of my ministry. Out of the close fellowship I had with Dr. Charles Brashares of the Grace Methodist Church, came a plan and program which received notice in many parts of the United States, Europe, and other countries. We decided that we would have our congregations visit each other in a body. One would conduct his own service in his place of worship and the other would sit on the pulpit and give the benediction. In no other respect would the service be changed in the slightest degree. On a designated Friday night Charles, leading his elders and some five hundred members of his flock, attended our services; the next Sunday night I accompanied my board and several hundred members of the congregation to the Methodist Church and enjoyed the undeleted service there. Associated press carried the plan around the world, and in succeeding weeks Charles and I received letters of commendation from many far places. One

editorial suggested that we had created a new epoch in religious history, in that we had proved that two distinctly separate religious groups could attend the place of worship of neighbors without surrendering a single iota of principle, but with sympathy and understanding could appreciate the religious values and spiritual inspiration possessed by each. Dr. Brashares and I continued the custom until I left Dayton some years later.

It became evident to me, after the first three years of my life in Dayton, that congregational development was hampered and Temple activities were impeded by the woeful lack of facilities in the beautiful old building, erected many years before. It had been adequate for some years after its erection, but the solid growth of the community now made it imperative to obtain better facilities, if we expected to progress. With this in mind, I quietly suggested our needs to various members, as I visited them in their homes or saw them at various functions. I had pictures made showing our religious school children crowding into miserably small and unventilated classrooms. The narrow hallways were a menace. I pointed out the lamentable fact that no congregational affair could be held in our own building. The sisterhood, brotherhood, and young people had to hold meetings and dinners in public places. Without too much delay the idea of a new building gripped the imagination of the congregation. In my fourth year a gratifying campaign was conducted, entirely within the ranks of our own membership, though many Christians voluntarily contributed sizable sums. A large and beautiful site was selected on Salem Avenue at

Emerson. On it, a commodious and beautiful building could be erected and the lot could also be fittingly landscaped.

At my suggestion, Mr. Albert Kahn of Detroit, now recognized as one of the most famous and ablest architects in the world, was invited to design and plan the building for us. At first he hesitated. His time and talents were then required by great industrial concerns and he wondered how he could find time for a "small unit," which our project must have seemed to him. To us it was the largest project we had ever undertaken. With characteristic generosity and moved by the deep spiritual qualities rooted in him, he agreed to create our new Temple. I later learned that he had been urged to accept by his aged father, who in his early life had served as a rabbi abroad. Rabbi Kahn was a profound scholar, and I shall always feel that I was specially blessed in having his friendship during my younger days as assistant in Detroit.

Months later, when the plans were submitted to the Building Committee and Board, we were gratified to note how carefully Mr. Kahn had applied all the suggestions we had made concerning our needs. The beauty of the building appealed strongly to us, but we recognized that its erection in accordance with Mr. Kahn's plans would be almost impossible for us to finance. We might have used cheaper materials and have eliminated many of the intriguing features inserted by the architect's ingenuity. After much deliberation at my suggestion the congregation decided to build in separate units. Our chief need lay in supplying adequate quarters for our Religious School and facilities for the social phases of

our congregational life. Our worship needs would be met by the auditorium, designed to seat about five hundred. The large Temple auditorium would be built in later years as the community grew. On this basis we completed the first unit after many months of anxious waiting. Though the second unit has not yet been erected, because of several serious financial depressions, I am certain that some day it will be built. It might have been at the time, if only those who could have contributed very large sums had been more generous. Since then several have personally told me that they heartily wish they had devoted a large portion of their fortunes to the sanctuary rather than to the speculative market which later exploded so disastrously. My wife and I have always been glad that we gave the first contribution to the new building, the sum of \$1,000 which, for us, was large indeed.

When you are established in your own congregation, be very sure that the proposals you urge upon your community are within its honest reach. A small debt for a congregation is sometimes a healthful circumstance. It gives opportunity to the individuals and affiliated organizations to work in behalf of the sanctuary. The normal tendency on the part of the general membership is to leave the entire administration to the rabbi, the officers and Board of Trustees. The more members who are encouraged to work for the congregation on essential projects, the more vital that institution will be. However, a staggering debt, so heavy that the congregation finds it impossible to carry or to amortize, may destroy the spiritual attitude of the membership. The chief focus will be on the raising of funds; constant appeals must be made; a large share of congregational revenue will be used to pay

interest on loans, and the activities for which the Temple stands will starve. When you become impatient with your progress and are fired by too much ambition, remember that a well balanced debt may inspire; a very heavy debt may crush.

CHAPTER III

AT HOME IN THE HEART OF AMERICA

Three years after the erection of the exquisite building in Dayton, I began, for the first time in my life, to feel definitely satisfied. This state of contentment distressed me. During moments of introspection I had reached the conclusion that, if I ever attained the stage of supine smugness, I would rapidly disintegrate. I began to evaluate my work and discovered that I had created all necessary affiliated groups and that all were functioning well. The disturbing realization dawned upon me that during the rest of my life in Dayton I would be devoting my energies to keeping things going very much as they were. The steady but slow increase in population gave no indication that I would some day have larger numbers with which to work for the introduction of more far-reaching programs of activity. At the age of thirty-six, I knew that if I should ever contemplate a change, it must be soon. A year after the new Temple had been built I had received a call from a congregation in the Northwest which intrigued me very much, but which I rejected on the moral basis that it was my duty to remain in Dayton for a few years, until the debt incurred by the new building had been materially reduced.

Two years later I received an invitation to occupy the pulpit of B'nai Jehudah in Kansas City. Immediately I wrote the

President and told him that I had heard that at least a dozen rabbis had occupied the pulpit in recent months. Since it was known that the pulpit was vacant, by accepting their invitation I would be placing myself in the position of a candidate actively seeking the pulpit. Therefore, I refused the invitation to preach. I called Dr. Morgenstern and told him my decision. He chuckled and said, "If that is the way you feel, that is what you must do." Frankly, I thought the matter was ended. I had determined at all costs not to go "on trial" to any congregation and always to refrain from entering into competition with colleagues.

To my surprise another letter came from Kansas City with a more urgent request, stating that I was definitely being considered for election as rabbi of B'nai Jehudah. This time I explained at length that I considered a trial appearance an absolute farce, unfair to the congregation and to the rabbi. On trial the rabbi either preaches his best or his worst. Besides little can be learned about a man's personality, character or ability in one sermon.

The only way a congregation can gauge the worth of a minister is through examination of his work and reputation in the community in which he has labored for years. I laid emphasis on the fallacy of congregations placing so much weight on the eloquence of pulpiteers. Preaching is perhaps the least part of a rabbi's work, though it may be the most fascinating to him. With these convictions, I suggested, in my letter again refusing to go on trial, that, if B'nai Jehudah still considered me as a prospect, a committee be sent without my knowledge of its coming to examine my record and to hear me preach. Again I called Dr. Morgenstern and read

a copy of the letter I had mailed. I concluded with the rather forlorn statement: "Now I know I shall hear nothing more from Kansas City." Dr. Morgenstern laughed and replied: "I believe you will."

A month later, after Sabbath service was over, three distinguished-looking gentlemen, whom I had noticed scattered among my congregants during the service, came to me and introduced themselves as members of the committee from Kansas City. These eminent men, Messrs. Al Wurmser, Jacob Harzfeld and Sidney Altschuler, accompanied my wife and me to our home, and we chatted until the wee hours of the morning. During the course of conversation they informed me that they had individually approached dozens of men and women to make inquiry about my work. I was very proud when they told me that public officials, including the Mayor and Superintendent of Schools, editors, ministers, priests, lay-folk, Jew and non-Jew, had graciously endorsed and praised my eight years in Dayton. The chairman laughingly told me that, if I were half as good as my friends thought me to be, I would be good enough for Kansas City. Of course one never is. Ten days after the visit of the committee I was informed by long distance telephone and later by letter that I had been unanimously elected as rabbi of B'nai Jehudah. My stipulation, that I be permitted to finish my work in Dayton with the confirmation service and take up my work in Kansas City in September, 1928, was approved.

In April I accepted the invitation of the Board to visit Kansas City, in order to discuss with the congregational

officials essential plans which might be necessary for the inauguration of my ministry in the fall. When the Committee met me at the station, I requested the privilege of visiting my colleague, Rabbi Harry H. Mayer, an alumnus of Hebrew Union College, who had served B'nai Jehudah for twenty-nine years, and who had been made Rabbi Emeritus six months before my election. His retirement from active service was caused by an affliction affecting his vocal chords, which made it impossible for him to carry on the heavy task of preaching. The congregation, in just tribute to his loyal and distinguished service, had provided for him a lifetime annuity unparalleled in its generosity.

On the morning of my arrival Rabbi Mayer received me with cordiality. We chatted informally, and I learned that he had given me high endorsement to the Board and congregation. I had met him in previous years at conferences and Union meetings and had always liked him. I told him that I imagined many of the families he had served so well might call upon him to officiate at intimate functions and that I wanted him to feel perfectly free to accept any such requests as he might desire. He replied that he considered me the rabbi of the congregation, and that he would officiate on no occasion without first consulting me and receiving my sanction. With this correct attitude shared by both of us, it is not surprising that in these fourteen years our relationship has been not only friendly but also affectionate. There has been no slightest trace of interference or bickering. On the contrary, there has been constant helpfulness and mutual esteem. Rabbis living in the same community and attached to

identical congregations can exemplify Judaism's ideals of brotherhood, if they are motivated by love and understanding.

In my installation sermon I quoted a simple little poem, written by a gentle, unknown author, which I had used in my installations at Detroit and Dayton. The words are naive but they epitomize, in a very real sense, my philosophy of life:

God, make my life a little light
Within the world to glow,
A little flame that burneth bright
Wherever I may go.

God, make my life a little flower
That giveth joy to all,
Content to bloom in native bower
Although its place be small.

God, make my life a little song
That comforteth the sad,
That helpeth others to be strong
And makes the singer glad.

God, make my life a little hymn
Of tenderness and praise,
Of faith that never waxeth dim
In all Thy wondrous ways.

With the accumulated experience gained during the eleven years of my ministry in my two previous pulpits, the work in Kansas City brought me increasing enthusiasm and never-ending challenge. For an entire year I concentrated all my time and energy upon religious education, the pulpit and

affiliated organizations. By using the valued personnel of the Department of Synagogue and School Extension and Dr. Abraham Franzblau's department here at the College, we have developed what we consider a very satisfactory curriculum and school plan. Though results must always be intangible, we feel we have made definite progress. Rabbis throughout America should feel a lasting indebtedness to the Union, the Conference, and the College for the splendid materials that have been produced and for the helpful techniques which have been devised in the last twenty-five years. Without them our work would be completely hopeless. Through Bible classes for Sisterhood and Brotherhood members we have stimulated adult religious education. The Brotherhood class has met with me for thirteen years for a six o'clock dinner on Wednesday nights, followed by a Bible lecture. In our conscientious study we have examined every verse of the Bible with commentaries; and in addition, we have studied every word of the New Testament and the Apocrypha. There are at least a dozen members of the class who have never missed a session in those years.

Early in 1930 a situation arose at the University of Missouri that commanded my attention. Prof. Harmon O. De Graff of the Sociology Department worked out with his students a questionnaire on the subject of sex. He submitted the questions to Dr. Max Meyer, a noted scholar and author, who headed the Department of Psychology, for his scientific approval. The questionnaires were then circulated among the students in the sociology class, and they were told to answer them honestly and return them privately to the instructor without signature. In some way the editor of a Co-

lumbia newspaper procured a copy of the questionnaire, published it uncensored and ran a scathing editorial, denouncing it and demanding the dismissal of the faculty members who permitted its circulation among students. Exposed to the prurient gaze of sensation seekers, who like to wallow in salacious literature, the questionnaire was shocking. It had been seriously devised for scientific purpose. It suffered in its public exposure, as some very bold narratives of the Bible would appear ribald if they were taken out of context. The press, throughout the state, began a concerted campaign of denunciation. Within a few days, Dr. Stratton D. Brooks, President of the University (without the knowledge of the curators), expelled Dr. De Graff and suspended Dr. Max Meyer for a year.

After examining the questionnaire thoroughly, I preached upon its contents, insisted that University students were old enough and intelligent enough to hear and to study all the truth of science and demanded that academic freedom in Missouri be protected by the people through their insistence that the professors be reinstated. In order to awaken public opinion upon this subject, I decided to take a step that would have a two-fold purpose; first, it would greatly aid Dr. Meyer, who was suspended without salary, and, second, it would arouse the people to their responsibility. With this in mind, I wired Dr. Meyer that some of his friends were immediately beginning a movement to turn his year of suspension into a Sabbatical year of research and rest. Within a week a few hundred letters had been sent to people throughout the state and the press had published our call for funds; we received more than \$2,000. The fund would have reached large fig-

ures, had not Brooks erroneously told the press that suspension did not deprive Dr. Meyer of his salary.

Rallying a few local ministers to the cause of academic freedom, we decided that the episode of the questionnaire must be symptomatic of general academic conditions at the university. Drs. Burris Jenkins, L. M. Birkhead and I determined to go to the roots of the matter. We corresponded with faculty members whom we knew, in whom we had confidence and who trusted us. Presently we received strictly personal letters, either giving very intimate information or suggesting leads that directed us to sources, which otherwise would have been hidden and beyond our reach. It required only a short time to establish the fact, beyond a doubt, that a reign of abject terror pervaded the campus, and that professors and instructors were in mortal fear of capricious dismissal. There was general uncertainty concerning tenure of office. No state university anywhere seemed so fearful of the clamor of the superstitious rabble. Dr. Brooks seemed to be ruling with the iron hand of bigotry and the mailed fist of stupidity. We kept gathering indisputable data and waited for a propitious time to inaugurate our demand upon the Board of Curators that Dr. Brooks be given the opportunity to resign. The proper time came speedily when Dr. James H. Rogers, Professor of Economics, who later went to Yale, resigned with the ringing declaration, "The University of Missouri now is declared to be no longer an institution where scholars may go and work with the assurance of the freedom in teaching and research granted in the ranking universities of the country."

Promptly I communicated with the Board of Curators

through its president, Judge James E. Goodrich, an honorable man, whom I knew and highly respected. My letter was direct and insistent. I said: "It is intolerable to me that a man of Dr. Rogers' standing should find it necessary to resign from our State University. Unless the Board of Curators takes immediate steps to discover the truth of the whole situation, I shall proceed, with other leaders of Kansas City, to demand that the Governor himself appoint a special commission of independent citizens to make this investigation." The demand was effective, but action was slow. After the Curators had announced the decision to examine the distressing situation, we never permitted them to forget their promise. From pulpit and platform my committee, which had grown through the accretion of volunteers throughout the state, presented the unassailable facts. Public sentiment grew and became dynamic. Letters and telegrams from individuals literally poured into the homes of the individual curators. Action could no longer be delayed.

In March, 1930 President Brooks was given the opportunity to resign. He refused to do so. In April the Curators dismissed him and issued an enigmatical statement to the public, a statement typical of little politicians, who receive political appointments to positions of great responsibility which, mentally or spiritually, they are not qualified to hold. I quote that statement, "We unanimously find as follows: that the sex questionnaire has no place in this controversy; that the board nearly one year ago, after a full hearing, reached a definite conclusion on that subject and now again confirms that finding. That matter has neither directly nor indirectly influenced the members of the board in the con-

clusions we have reached. As to the charge that there is a condition of mental or mortal terror among the professors of the University, we find there is no basis of fact whatever for such a statement, and that it is wholly unfounded.

"However, the board does find that the relations between President Brooks and the members of this board and the relations of President Brooks with the faculty of the University have impelled the members of this board to declare, as they now do, that the welfare of the University requires that the term of Dr. Brooks, as president of the University, should end. The board has reached this conclusion after serious thought and careful consideration, having in mind only the well-being and future progress of the University. This board has reached the foregoing conclusion in spite of, rather than because of, the activities of certain groups, who seem interested chiefly in changing our action on the questionnaire, and with whose views on that subject this board cannot agree."

If the questionnaire and reign of terror had had nothing to do with the dismissal of Dr. Brooks, the board never revealed the "real" reasons for his removal for the well-being and future progress of the University. We chuckled contentedly over the lame statement issued by the board to salve an outraged public and reached the conclusion, succinctly voiced by Shakespeare, "Methinks he doth protest too much." Our view is fully maintained in the Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors, Vol. XVI, No. 2, February 1930.

Some of the reactions during the turbulent months, in which we were arousing public opinion to force action in the

menace to the University, surprised me and my colleagues. A few organizations and some small ministerial alliances, under the sway of the exploded Klan philosophy, tried to make a "Jewish" fight of the matter. Scurrilous anonymous letters flooded my office outnumbering those of approval and commendation. Some denounced me for daring to attack a "noble Christian gentleman." One little newspaper, published in a village, called me "the ambitious rabbi who is trying to oust President Brooks, so that he may become president of the University."

Furthermore, some of the prominent Jewish business men of my community became fearful and suggested to me privately that Jews ought to keep quiet on public questions. They solemnly urged me to remain in the background and let the Christian preachers carry on the fight. This fearsome attitude of some prominent Jews always sickens me, and I am praying for the day when all Jews will be so completely filled with the spirit of American liberty, that they will not hesitate to fulfill public responsibility without fear of reaction on the part of bigots and fanatics. I warn you that, when you are in active rabbinical service, situations will confront you which will require you to speak out as free men. Be sure you have the facts and that the facts are right; then speak honestly and courageously. But be ready and willing to receive the rebuffs of the fearful and the condemnation of wizened souls, whose latent prejudices are awakened to hostility.

Citation of another but a very different episode will clarify this point. A negro had committed a heinous crime near

Maryville, Missouri. Inflamed by lust, he had waited in the vicinity of a one-room school house in the country and, after the children were dismissed, he stealthily entered the room, found the white teacher alone, ravished her, and then murdered her. The crime was horrible and created an outburst of wrath throughout the State. After an exciting man-hunt, the culprit was found and rushed to jail. There he confessed his crime and was immediately taken into open court, where he reiterated his confession. The court promptly sentenced him to be hanged in the jail of that county, a few weeks later. The sheriff, fearing possible mob violence, very properly moved the prisoner to a nearby county for safe keeping.

A week before the day of execution a speaking engagement took me to the vicinity of Maryville. As I returned on the train, a man seated next to me said, as the train stopped at the station, "If you want to see a first-class lynching come back here a week from today." Though the statement startled and shocked me, I probed my fellow passenger as much as possible and found that a concerted move was on foot to seize the prisoner as he entered the jail to be hanged. I found that people in surrounding counties had been invited by their Maryville friends to be present for the event on the day set by the court for the hanging. I was so much disturbed by the information, callously given me, that upon my arrival at my home I called the Governor by long distance and conveyed to him the communication I had received. Though at first he was inclined to believe that I had been duped, he promised me he would send an investigator to the scene. So definite was the information the Governor procured, that he

promptly ordered a regiment of state militia, commanded by Col. Adams, to Maryville, the day before the date set for the execution.

Early in the morning a mob, estimated at 10,000 people, filled the courthouse and jail lawn and overflowed into nearby streets. The militiamen under Col. Adams remained in the Armory. The county judge, hearing the swelling roar of the crowd, went to his courtroom window, surveyed the mob for a brief moment, then quietly went to his desk to make some entries in his court records. Soon the sheriff and his deputies arrived with the prisoner in an automobile. Promptly the unmasked mob disarmed the officers and seized the screaming prisoner. Not a shot was fired. The prisoner was dragged several miles to the ill-fated scene of his crime, accompanied by a cheerful, milling throng of men, women and children. By this time driven insane by fear, the Negro was hoisted to the roof of the school building and was chained to it. Amid cheers torches were applied, and soon the whole edifice was engulfed in roaring flames. The crowd gleefully watched the fire as it approached the helpless fiend and burned him to a cinder. Some of the mob waited for the ruins to cool, hopeful that they might find a souvenir of the occasion.

Obviously such brutish manifestation of barbarism in my own State, moved me to a passionate outburst against the ruthless act and against lynching in general. The Colonel of the militia was removed with a stinging gubernatorial rebuke. Nothing else was done however. Though a trivial investigation was made, no arrests followed. The State hid its disgrace by lapsing into silence. One would think, under such provocation, that the conscience of church people would be ir-

resistibly aroused, and that believers in the sanctity of life and the processes of democracy would voice tumultuous protest, or at least would understand and hearken to the words of one so moved. And yet I received, on that occasion, scribbled anonymous cards saying in effect, "Let the white people handle the Negro problem; don't meddle with affairs that don't concern you!" These idiotic sentiments would not have disturbed me in the least, had they not been followed by telephone calls from some of my members, who cravenly suggested that I remain silent on such momentous questions. In substance, they feared that Jewish leadership in public affairs such as this would intensify the dormant prejudice against the Jew.

Let me say to you, as I have repeatedly said to my co-religionists in and out of the pulpit, that Israel lives today because of the cherished ideals he possesses, which have impelled him to speak out fearlessly, in all eras of history, against injustice and inhumanity wherever he has found it. Silence on moral questions means ruin for the Jew. It is altogether possible that the irrationality of anti-Semitism may persist for many decades. If the Jew is to be hated, then let him be hated because he has dared to stand adamant as champion of justice, righteousness, love and brotherhood. In this spirit I rejoice that my ancestors, among the countless gems of spiritual wisdom they conceived, created the great sentence: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou bear witness in a cause to turn aside after a multitude to pervert justice." (Exodus 23:2)

Among the many invitations that come to me to deliver addresses, the most cherished are those received from high

schools, universities and colleges, either for assemblies, baccalaureate services or commencements. Especially do I treasure the engagements made for me by the Jewish Chautauqua Society, created by an early graduate of the Hebrew Union College, Dr. Henry Berkowitz, and now under the auspices of the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods. The beneficent results of such engagements on the part of American rabbis is beyond estimate. It will suffice to say, from personal experience, that the rabbi is received with marked esteem by university officials and his Jewish message, on platform and in classroom, is received with open-minded pleasure. Conferences held with individual students, who request them, are fruitful, and open forums impinging upon some Jewish topic are eagerly attended. It is my hope that, in coming years, you and your congregations will give wholehearted support to this important and productive Jewish work, so ably directed at this time by Mr. Arthur Reinhart.

My interest in this phase of our ministry is heightened by my association with the Jewish Student Foundation at the University of Missouri. About eleven years ago, after having delivered an address at a Union Service for University students, I met Dean Edwards, head of the Bible College of Missouri, affiliated with the University. This Bible College had been formed by many Protestant denominations years before; it owned its building and had an admirable arrangement by which the university gave full academic credit for all the courses its students took in the Bible College.

Dean Edwards expressed the hope that some day the Jews of Missouri might join the Protestants in the support of the college. The suggestion pleased me. After several months of

communication with Dr. Edwards, I gathered a small group of prominent and wealthy Jews and explained my desire to create a chair of Jewish study at the University under the auspices of the Bible College. The idea received instant endorsement. A small committee worked with me to find sound ways and means to establish it. I suggested that, since B'nai B'rith was the one Jewish organization which had organizations in every sizable town, and since the national order was then engaged in Hillel Foundations at five or six universities having very large Jewish populations, it might be a good thing to create the chair as a special project of all the B'nai B'rith lodges in Missouri. I placed this proposal before my own lodge, and it received unanimous endorsement. Furthermore, the lodge undertook to procure the endorsement and support of all lodges in the state. The majority responded at once; therefore it seemed that the financial arrangements would immediately be placed on a sound basis. At that time there were 4,000 B'nai B'rith members in the state which would have necessitated only a per capita contribution of around \$1.50 to raise the estimated sum of \$6,000 for salary and incidentals to supply the chair.

Happy over this ready reception of my idea and assured by B'nai B'rith of financial support, I communicated the joyful news to Dean Edwards. He called his board from all parts of the state and a unanimous resolution was passed inviting the Jews of Missouri to join the Bible College by creating a Chair of Jewish Study under its auspices, with Jewish representation on its board. I was then requested to select the man to fill that chair.

Without hesitation I wrote to Dr. Morgenstern, relating

all circumstances to him and requested him to designate a man for the position. In due time we received from him several recommendations with first, second, and third choices. Dr. Isadore Keyfitz, then on the faculty of the University of Chicago, was selected. It was agreed that he would begin his term when the University opened in the fall.

Indescribably happy, I went out west to fill a commencement engagement, tranquilly missing the B'nai B'rith District Convention to be held at Akron, Ohio, but confident that the Missouri delegation would receive commendation from the delegates of the seven other states in the district for their vision in undertaking such a far-reaching project. Imagine my unspeakable dismay when I learned that the district, by a small margin, not only failed to endorse the plan, but refused Missouri the right to engage in that endeavor! It seems that representatives of the Hillel Foundation Commission had violently objected to the project, on the fallacious grounds that it would interfere with fund raising in Missouri for the support of Hillel Foundations at other state universities. The argument was specious and has been proved untenable and ridiculous. The contrary would have been true. It is reasonable to believe that Jews of the state, maintaining a chair in their own institution of higher learning, would have been far more sympathetic to appeals to give funds for Jewish activities on the campuses of other states. As it was, many were saying, "Why should we support religious and cultural programs for five or six hundred Jewish students at Ohio State, Michigan, or Illinois, while we deny that same privilege to two or three hundred of our own sons

and daughters in our state?" However, the district ruling prevailed.

I returned home in September after a brief and unhappy vacation to meet the burdens of the holyday season. I was distraught and fighting angry. The senselessness and the injustice of the situation appalled me. Dr. Keyfitz had confidently begun his work. He had left a secure position to undertake it. To stop now would work cruel hardship upon him and would bring all of us into disrepute with the Protestants of the state. We had the chair, but no organization and no funds to maintain it. Immediate action was imperative.

I went to one of my closest friends, George Sittenfeld, a wealthy man, the kind who has a social vision and a generous heart. I told him my problem. He was familiar with the project, being among the few to whom I had explained it at first. He at once recognized the gravity of my plight. He smilingly reached in his desk for his checkbook and gave me a check for three thousand dollars. "Take this," he said, "and I'll go with you to St. Louis. Some of our friends there will help us." The use of the tiny word "us" meant as much to me as his large gift. It meant that he would help establish the chair firmly. We did get generous support in St. Louis, and on our return home I insisted that we must procure from local people a sufficient amount to repay him. He demurred at first; but when I pointed out to him that the chair must continue to exist year after year, and it would require many loyal and generous supporters, he consented. For two days we walked the streets soliciting funds. We had agreed that we would approach only those who could easily afford to

give one hundred dollars apiece. Frequently he would approach an outstanding merchant and bluntly say, "Joe, give me and the rabbi a hundred dollars." Just as frequently the money would be forthcoming, or sometimes the donor would meekly inquire about its purpose. George insisted it would take too long, if I took time to tell each one the story which he had learned by heart; but I was equally insistent that any man who gave a hundred dollars was at least entitled to know for what purpose the money would be used.

It required only a short while for Dr. Keyfitz to demonstrate that our choice had been thoroughly justified. In the ten years he has been on the campus he has attained a deservedly high esteem among the faculty members of the University and the Bible College. He has taught hundreds of students, including ministers of many denominations, and he has been constantly creating good will between the many student groups. Since his advent anti-Semitism has disappeared from the campus.

In the meanwhile I took steps to form a state-wide organization which would supply keymen in each community to stimulate interest in the Jewish Student Foundation and its Chair of Jewish Study. For several year financial support was easy to procure. Then the serious depression finally reached our section of the country. Men who formerly sent annual gifts of a hundred dollars wrote that they could afford only ten dollars or nothing at all. Instead of calling upon thirty or forty men, I was compelled to see hundreds with a few faithful helpers. Try as we would, it was impossible to secure even half the sum we needed. That entailed great hardship for all concerned.

Dr. Keyfitz' responsibilities had increased through the arrival of a lovely daughter. In good faith he had bought a modest home. We could have told him that many men were losing jobs, businesses were liquidating, factories were closing, all were making adjustments. I could have told him that I had requested my congregation to reduce my salary by twenty-five per cent, so that it might carry on its work; in view of all this I could with propriety and moral consistency have suggested that he would remain in his position at his own risk and that his income, from all appearances, might be reduced to a fraction of what he had formerly received. This might be a dread necessity, which made me ill to contemplate. To ward off that evil day I persuaded Mr. Aaron Waldheim of St. Louis to lend me \$2,000 on my personal note without interest for a year, hoping that times would be brighter and that a hasty campaign might relieve our anxiety. When that year rolled speedily around, our campaign produced only enough to maintain the work for that year and when the note came due, I had to cash in some of my insurance policies to procure the money necessary to meet it. Some day the Jews of Missouri may feel that they owe me \$2,000 but whether they do or not is immaterial. The chair with its magnificent work was saved. It is now safely established through participation in the Jewish Welfare Federations of the state, one of which I helped to organize. It is now ably administered by my colleague, Rabbi Ferdinand M. Isserman of St. Louis.

It is apparent that many activities are not directly associated with the routine work of the rabbi within the confines of his own congregation. In pursuing them the minister must

ration his time so that no duty to his own institution will be neglected. In large congregations the multitudinous demands made by many types of organizations and projects may well occupy most of the time of the rabbi. Usually, when he participates in wider activities, he must be ready to sacrifice a large proportion of time, which other men reserve for their personal pleasure and relaxation. On the other hand, the rabbi who works under pressure of many duties and multiple engagements usually learns to perform his tasks with keener concentration and with a minimum waste of time. One becomes accustomed to utilizing every possible moment in preparation for the duties that confront him, sometimes months in advance. In my own case I have found that the heavier my calendar, the better work I can do; though I confess I frequently long for the opportunity to enjoy a full night's sleep without feeling that I am neglecting some task that ought to be done.

It is my feeling that time taken outside my own building is frequently as essential as the hours I spend there. This is especially true in the participation in well planned activities in company with other rabbis and ministers. In communities where other congregations exist, it is important that the Reform rabbi form friendly relationships with the Orthodox congregations and their rabbis. Together they may minimize the tendency to secularize Jewish life, and together they may exert a potent spiritual influence upon all Jewish institutions and agencies. Comradeship among Conservative, Orthodox and Reform rabbis will not only create commendable harmony in their attitude toward community problems and endeavors, but also will stimulate a wholesome spirit of oneness

in the community. From experience with our own small Rabbinical Association I know personally how much good can be accomplished when "brethren dwell together in unity." So wide has been the effect of this rabbinical fellowship that it would be considered unnatural for a Jewish board to be without rabbinical members or that any project be undertaken without rabbinical participation and guidance.

Co-operation and mutual respect encompassing the rabbis of Kansas City has produced many beneficent results, among which our Jewish Union Thanksgiving Service, with all congregations participating and all rabbis and cantors conducting the service, holds a lustrous place. The beauty and significance of the service, presented with complete harmony, is an annual reminder of the inherent unity of our religious community. I rejoice in this pleasant unity, in which we share without the surrender of any conviction or principle. The breadth of rabbinical fellowship has been demonstrated on many occasions, but especially at the time we were making definite the plans for a joint Jewish Thanksgiving service, which we had contemplated for some time. The other rabbis knew that for many years my congregation had been joining Boulevard Christian churches in a Union Service, ministers offering their churches and preaching in turn. Therefore, my colleagues, without any suggestion from me, took the position that I should continue my association on Thanksgiving with the interdenominational group, and that our Jewish service would be set at a time to avoid conflict. With a slight adjustment of time, a satisfactory schedule was worked out, and now both services are held so that I may participate in each. Such manifestations of fellowship

bring me increasing pleasure. I always rejoice when Orthodox congregations invite me to speak at services or at annual meetings or when Orthodox families invite me to officiate at weddings in their homes. Multiplicity of duties will not always permit me to share with Orthodox rabbis in funeral services or wedding ceremonies. Nonetheless I consider requests to do so a gesture of friendship on the part of a large and respected group in my city.

Just as I welcome stimulating companionship with my rabbinical colleagues, so do I cherish the friendships that have come to me through the years with many beloved pastors and priests. These friendships usually began as acquaintanceship, through participation in some communal enterprise. They have never been started artificially by seeking or ingratiating, though I have made it a habit, in company with some other minister, to visit ministerial newcomers. I have felt it a compulsion of hospitality to bid them welcome and to make them feel at home in the city I love, and to which for a time they will be strangers. But the real friendships come slowly. They grow. They can exist only between men who know that they are equals, who entertain sincere mutual respect, who will not tolerate condescension, and who recognize the right of men to be different and to think differently. Religious bigots cannot be friends; their minds are closed and their hearts are arrogant. But men may maintain viewpoints as far apart as the poles and yet may hold lasting affection for each other, if they recognize the earnestness and sincerity of their fellows.

Some years ago, a few ministers of Kansas City realized this truth; and, feeling that our paths crossed too infrequently,

we decided to create an informal club, to which kindred spirits would be invited for membership. Since it was felt that no man should be extended membership unless he could be a "blessing" to others, I told them about the *Shemoneh Esreh*, the Eighteen Benedictions. Promptly the number was set at eighteen. Carefully choosing men in different denominations, with superior seminary and academic background, we rapidly brought the club into existence. Promptly we dubbed it "The Wranglers Club." We meet once a month at 7:30 for breakfast in a church as the guests of a member. At 8 o'clock, the assigned paper is read, and for a half hour we wrangle over its contents. Discussions on philosophic and theological questions become lively. Through the years the men have learned that, when the program committee assigns them to present the course for the year, the highly critical group will demand the best scholarship they can produce.

The emanations of such fellowship and sharing of viewpoints can hardly be estimated. Pulpits are exchanged with absolute fairness and dignity; lay groups intermingle at forums and church social functions. At least once a month some Christian group, led by a minister, attends our Sabbath evening service; and, after reverently joining in the prayers and singing the congregational hymn, the group remains with me at the conclusion of the service, while I explain at some length the significance of our ceremonial objects and the Torah. A brief question period follows, in which my answers usually seem to astonish them. They are amazed to find that our Torah is a part of the Bible we gave to them, and that the founders of Christianity and the authors of the New

Testament were Jews. A denominational college, some distance away, sends its student body by busses to our services once a year. The National Training School for Missionary Workers, with its faculty and student body, makes an annual pilgrimage to a Sabbath service. In explanations of Jewish affirmations and the outline of Jewish theology I have given to Jewish and Christian groups, I have been immeasurably aided by the lucid and profound writings of Dr. Samuel S. Cohon, Professor of Theology at the Hebrew Union College. His soul-stirring faith, expressed with his notable skill in writing, never fails to inspire. I always feel it a privilege to recommend his works to many groups.

Repercussions of Temple attendance by Christian groups are gratifying. Ministers and teachers I have never known personally call to inquire if they may attend services with an adult class or a youth group. I always reply that deep over the portals of the Temple is carved the prophetic verse: "My House Shall Be a House of Prayer for All Peoples."

One Sunday, while occupying the pulpit of one of my most distinguished friends of the clergy, I was startled to hear him tell his congregants, in absolute seriousness, that he considered me to be one of the best Christians he had ever met. His congregation received the declaration with equal seriousness. As he continued his glowing introduction, I felt a growing embarrassment. I knew, in my heart of hearts, that I had always maintained the philosophy of Judaism meticulously and had never made any compromising theological statements either for expediency or ingratiation. Then it flashed upon me that my friend was using the term Christian in no dogmatic sense. To him the word connoted all that

was good and true. I was much touched by his affectionate regard and of course felt that I did not deserve such appellation. When I acknowledged his gracious introduction, I recalled the story of Lessings' *Nathan the Wise*, in which the Baron, grateful for a service Nathan had rendered him, exclaimed, "By God, Nathan, thou art a Christian; never was a better!" Soberly Nathan replied, "That which makes me to thee a Christian, makes thee to me a Jew!" I reiterate that such generous sentiments on the part of my friends is a constant challenge to me to strive to become what they think and want me to be. Reciprocal devotion prompted me to use as my sermon text, when he was made an Episcopalian Bishop, "Robert Nelson Spencer—Man of God."

The recently revised Union Prayer Book has brought to our congregation the opportunity to restore many of the old customs, reinterpreted to meet our modern needs. I have found a majority of my membership welcoming the Kiddush. Some, who never had it in their homes, show no disposition to like it and feel quite honestly that the Conference and the Union have "gone Orthodox." Because of this reaction I have felt it necessary to use extreme caution in introducing extra memorial services and the Torah Service on Friday night. Customs imposed upon a people by rabbinical decision can only irritate and confuse. Unless ceremonials and practices fill a need and inspire, they are superfluous. However, I have no doubt that, with patience, my folk will learn to cherish all the newly restored and interpreted parts of our ritual.

To enrich our service I have felt for many years the need of a cantor. The truculence of the world brought us one. We

had heard that a number of German cantors had reached the safe shores of America as refugees. Our Board and congregation were of the opinion that institutions as well as individuals must sacrificially employ our distressed brothers who had found haven here. We, therefore, with the help of generous Paul Uhlmann, sought a cantor and were fortunate in having recommended to us Alfred A. Rosbasch. He had received a splendid seminary education at Hebrew Teachers' College at Wuerzburg and comprehensive academic preparation at the Universities of Heidelberg and Freiburg. He had procured his cantoral education from Leo Golamin of Berlin. For several years he had served as first cantor in the New Synagogue in Breslau. We shall never forget his first participation in a Sabbath eve service nearly four years ago. With skillful musicianship he brought a glow of beauty and warmth to the whole ritual. It seemed to us that all the pathos and all the hope of a tormented world were integrated in the lovely tones of his baritone voice and the traditional melodies he sang. He came to us as a refugee to fill an artificial place made for him; but in the passing years he has made his own place of inspiration and helpfulness. Under his direction the children of our school sing as I never thought they could sing. He teaches Hebrew adroitly and prepares emigré boys for Bar Mizvah. He cheerfully assumes any congregational task I suggest to him. In our case it is a clear instance of casting our bread upon the waters.

In relating my many interesting experiences I must not omit several which have proved to be valuable in my career, and which some day I hope may fall to your portion. In 1938 the American Library Association met in annual con-

vention in Kansas City. The program committee invited me to address the assembly of librarians on the subject, "The Summum Bonum of Library Service." A few weeks after the convention the president of the Association invited me to serve with four others on the Religious Book Selection Committee of the Association. Had I known the enormous amount of work entailed by my acceptance, I think I would have rejected it. It was the duty of the committee to receive, read and annotate all the religious volumes issued by all the publishing houses in America. Each member served for three years. Fortunately the books would arrive each week, but they averaged more than a hundred each year. A considerable proportion had little merit; others were literary contributions. Some we discarded with little concern; they were palpably mediocre. Other volumes were illuminating. The Committee would meet a month before the convention and select the fifty best volumes. The list was then accepted by the association with the recommendation that librarians throughout the country give the selected volumes preference on their shelves. Though the labor was huge, I felt that through it I had been privileged to receive a liberal education in many fields related to the scope of my ministry.

In a less significant but no less interesting manner, I have an opportunity to keep abreast of current literature. For seven years I have enjoyed giving at a suburban theatre a series of book reviews, six in the fall and six in the spring, under the auspices of the Plaza Association. Occasionally the audiences have exceeded 2,000; they average 1,500. Since the committee permits me to select the books I desire to review, I feel that the time required for reading and presentation is

well spent. I am encouraged in this conclusion by the fact that several colleges and schools permit their English classes to attend these Tuesday morning literary discussions. I have been delighted to find that the audiences welcome especially good biographies or historical narratives, particularly those associated with the early days of American development or the pioneer stories of the West. Thomas Wolfe, Kenneth Roberts, Thornton Wilder, Franz Werfel, John Gunther, and Thomas Mann are high favorites with large crowds.

With routine and many special engagements constantly pressing upon me, it is no easy task to read and prepare a dissertation upon a volume. Therefore I demand the books months in advance, so that I may have two reviews fully prepared while I am reading the third volume. I place a small mark beside paragraphs which I want to examine again. On the night before and the early morning of the review, I must spend at least six hours in scanning the volume, to obtain proper balance for analysis, criticism, and comparisons for the sixty minutes I am allotted for the discussion. Through practice in this technique, I have been able to discuss the lengthier and more difficult works without a note. I suggest that the "high-brows," who scoff at current literature, make a serious mistake. While much of it is doubtlessly pornographic and much of it is drivel, a great deal of it mirrors the life of the modern world and has definite cultural and spiritual value.

CHAPTER IV

A RABBI FIGHTS A POLITICAL MACHINE

It seems ironical that so much of my ministry, as I survey it, should have been spent in fighting, yes, in relentless, uncompromising fighting! By nature I am peaceful. Nothing brings me greater contentment of soul than tranquil, amicable association with my fellowmen in all walks of life. Strife is abhorrent to me, and I will go to great length to avoid dispute or contention. Arguments over trivia hold no delights for me. I loathe controversy involving phantasmagoria. Ephemeral questions of transitory significance fail to arouse my antagonism. Debates over inconsequential themes may receive my passing interest, but I have never permitted myself, in advocacy of viewpoint, to arouse the antipathy of opponents. Disagreements may be held without malice. With this psychology an integral part of my innermost being, I am filled with consternation over the astounding fact that nearly one-third of my ministry has been devoted to bitter strife. One who shuns enmity has frequently been the center of a civic maelstrom. I found it unavoidable and imperative to fight a pernicious political machine.

As I unfold some of the salient phases of that political battle, I gravely emphasize a deep-rooted conviction that a rabbi or minister should never, under any circumstance, engage in a *partisan* political controversy. He may have

his private political loyalties, but he betrays his profession and vitiates his leadership if, in the pulpit or out of it, he expresses opinions based on the bias of political party affiliation. No political party has a monopoly of virtue or corruption. The minister who beclouds his judgment with blind adherence to a political philosophy or unquestioning loyalty to the personnel of a political organization proves *ipso facto* his inability to express impartial opinions or to judge modern life on the broad gauge of truth and righteousness. Partisanship in the pulpit negates the spirit of religious idealism. These convictions are fundamental principles with me and are thus emphasized to impress you with my sincere belief that my political battle contained no element of *partisanship*. In very truth it was a war directed not against men, but against a ruthless, unscrupulous system, a wicked degrading machine, which corrupted a community.

While I hold the firm conviction that ministers should never engage in partisan political activities, I also cherish the unwavering belief that, where iniquity runs rampant, where depraved and selfish men prey upon a community, it is not only the *right* but also the compelling *duty* of the minister to lead in the movement to eradicate such fell powers from his community. If one holds the fearless, God-intoxicated prophets of Israel as his human ideals, as I do, one is impelled by his conscience to enter the fray with all the courage and strength he can summon.

You are familiar with the great work of Amos, the shepherd of Tekoa, and recall his scathing denunciation of rulers and leaders of his day, who perverted justice, promoted depravity and lustfully pursued their greedy desires. While

surveying the current political, social, and economic degradation, Amos utters a sentence poignant in its implications: "Therefore the prudent doth keep silent in such a time, for it is an evil time." (Amos 5:13)

The prudent are silent; they play safe in dangerous situations; but Amos found something more than prudence in life. He had voiced the driving imperatives of his soul when he stated the rhetorical questions: "If the lion roars who can but fear; if the Lord God speaks, who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:8) He answered his own propounded interrogations by his vigorous condemnation of those "that afflict the just, that take a bribe and that turn aside the needy in the gate." My prophetic ideal was aware of the attitude his contemporaries would hold toward him as he sadly proclaimed: "They hate him that reproveth in the gate and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly." (Amos 5:10)

Coupled with the powerful enunciations of Amos, which never fail to stir my mind and heart, there came to me the gentler words of another prophet, Jeremiah, "And seek the peace of the city, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." (Jer. 29:7) Zachariah 8:3 speaks of the cleansed city when he exclaims: "And Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth." In later eras our sages were also concerned with the characteristics and caliber of communities.

It is not extravagant to say that the Talmud includes what might well be called a Code of Municipal Legislation. A few citations will show that there were ten minimal requirements for a good city, and the suggestion is made that the wise man will refrain from inhabiting a community

where one of these essentials is lacking; a physician, a surgeon, a proper system of drainage, a public bath house, pure drinking water, a meeting-place for worship, a teacher of children, a notary, an agency for giving relief to the destitute and a court with power to give effect to its judgments. (Sanhedrin 17b) The Talmud was even concerned with traffic. The highroads were to be made thirty-two feet wide, while those leading to cities of refuge were to be twice that width. (Baba Bathra 100a) Utmost care had to be exercised and a general rate levied for the administration of relief to the poor, as well as for keeping the streets in good repair, for cleaning them and for the removal of all obstacles which might impede the free passage of men and animals. (Baba Kama 50b) Industrial plants, injurious to health or offensive to the general population, were not permitted to be located nearer than fifty cubits from the extreme limits of a town. (Baba Bathra 25a) All interments had to be outside municipal limits, no burial places being permitted within the town itself. (*Ibid.*)

Nearly sixty years ago Dr. Simeon Singer, one of the first graduates of Jews' College in London and for many years a noted rabbi there, wrote in an essay on Judaism and citizenship: "To all that has hitherto been said on the duties of citizens, whether as suggested by ancient teachings or by latter day requirements, it will perhaps be objected, 'What you deduce may be facts and may be more or less interesting; but are you not mixing up matters that do not belong together, things sacred and things secular, in strange confusion? The line between them is well marked in our days: religion is one thing, citizenship, with its privileges and ob-

ligations is another.' Well, my friends, in a certain superficial sense this may be true, but in a deeper sense it is not true. Religion and civic virtue are two only in the sense in which a root and a branch are two. A shriveled and pitiful thing is that religion which is an affair of synagogue or church only, of special times and occasions, and nothing else. What is the value of that man's religion, whose fellow-man is not the better for it; whom it does not impel to do something for the common weal; in whom it does not kindle a zealous spirit to diffuse, according to his opportunities, light and joy in the lives of others? Do not, therefore, grow indifferent to the conduct of public affairs. Watch them jealously and zealously with an eye to justice and truth. Keep your indignation warm for genuine abuses. Do not say, They concern me not. Not until they touch me will I stir? For as James Russell Lowell has written,

They are slaves most base
Whose love of right is for themselves, and not
For all their race.

"Remember that of all the evil done in the world one-third is due to the vicious people who do it and two-thirds to the virtuous who let it be done."

Virile exhortations from the lips of our sages, ancient and modern, encouraged me to undertake a task, stupendous in its difficulty, dangerous in its execution. The ringing words of the saintly Hillel gave strength to that determination: "In a place where there are no men strive thou to be a man." There were men in Kansas City in 1932, but they were strangely silent! The virtuous could not have been ignorant

of the abysmal depths to which our city had been sunk by the vicious, avaricious politicians. Realizing that the average person likes religious ideals in the abstract but shuns their application to current social and political problems, I was stubbornly determined to focus them upon the deplorable conditions in Kansas City.

The awaited opportunity to expose the deep-rooted corruption came when I accepted an invitation to address the Government Study Club of Kansas City on May 21, 1932 and chose for my subject, "A Non-Partisan and Non-Political Administration for Kansas City." The preparation for that important engagement required several months of painstaking study. A copy of the City Charter, which I had great difficulty in procuring, fascinated me. It was a superb instrument of government. It had been adopted by an overwhelming majority of the people in 1924. It established the city-manager form of administration with a mayor and council, four members of which were to be elected by districts and four-at-large. It abolished party emblems and placed the names of candidates for Council and Mayor upon a rotating ballot without any party designation. It created civil service in municipal employment both by letter and by spirit. It forbade political activity on the part of city employees and made it a crime to solicit funds from municipal workers for political purposes. It required the City Manager to submit an annual budget and held him criminally liable for any deficit. It was his duty to appoint competent department heads, who would be strictly accountable to him. An auditor appointed by the Council was the only city official not under the jurisdiction of the City Manager. It was his

lawful duty to submit a complete audit of city finances to the Council at the end of each fiscal year. It contained other wise guarantees for public protection, such as we find in the charters of Cincinnati and four hundred and fifty other American cities, which had received unnumbered benefits from this scientific form of government.

The people were delighted over the fact that they had abolished the old federal councilmanic form of city government which had proved expensive and inefficient. Under the old two-party system, the victor functioned on the premise that to him belonged the spoils. The people were heartily tired of the never-ending waste and venality of the old-fashioned government. They learned that it mattered little, as far as the welfare of the city was concerned, which party was in power. They knew from experience that both parties, the Democratic and the Republican, were led by self-seeking bosses, followed by sycophant ward-heelers, whose sole concern was in feeding at the public trough. So corrupt had both these machines become, that respectable men would seldom permit themselves to run for public office, and city employees were frowned upon as lackeys. They received no esteem as public servants. It was the hope of the people that the wise provisions of the city charter, which had been devised by some of the finest and most thoughtful citizens in the community, would establish the same integrity and efficiency in the operation of city business as that which existed in the large industries and corporations of the country without political control and dishonesty. Under such guarantees, it was also hoped that "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain" (Ex. 18:21) would respond to

the call of public service and would assume high official positions. Under such guarantees of civil service, it was expected that public employees would enter upon their work with dignity and with perfect self-respect would make municipal work their career.

The high hopes of the people were soon roughly crushed under the ruthless heel of selfish politicians and the machines they had built around them. The people failed to see what the politicians had cunningly anticipated, that, under the new Charter, if the people relaxed in their vigilance, confident that the powers of the Charter would protect them, the politicians, through control of patronage, could create a political organization which an unorganized community could never withstand. That is exactly what happened; the people complacently went to sleep and the bosses ruled supreme. Such smugness was not unique in Kansas City; it is too prevalent in America, as Lincoln Steffens so vividly reveals in his brilliant autobiography.

In the first election under the new Charter the Democrats and Republicans were almost evenly divided in their political strength. The Republican Mayor was elected with three Republican councilmen, but the Democrats elected five members of Council. Their fifth member received a majority of less than 300 votes. At the very first meeting of the Council its members, ostensibly elected on a non-partisan basis, divided sharply on bi-partisan grounds. They became actively, fanatically Democrats and Republicans. There was constant bickering and recrimination. The members of that Council were respectable men. They were not personally corrupt. But they were soon made to feel that they owed

their election to the political boss and that they must take his advice in the appointment of a City Manager. They meekly chose a realtor, who had absolutely no training nor capacity for the huge and involved tasks confronting an administrator of a complex city. He was Henry F. McElroy, who has since died, died as his house of cards was blown down by the tempest of public wrath over his personal maladministration and the vileness he had permitted to exist. His only qualification lay in the fact that he was an intimate friend of Thomas J. Pendergast, the outstanding political boss in Kansas City.

Pendergast is one of the most interesting personalities I have ever known. He is broken in spirit and in body now. He has suffered the tortures of the damned from his illness, while he has been incarcerated in a Federal prison. The humiliation, as his empire crumbled upon him, has been agonizing. You will not think me maudlin if I tell you sincerely that I feel a deep sympathy for this man who could have been great. He possessed the powers of mind and heart to have served the people nobly. He chose rather to play a ruthless political gamble, and he won huge stakes for a while; but he lost ultimately, as they all must.

He was a saloonkeeper in his early years and inherited his political kingdom from his uncle. Through the years, by his indomitable will and through those tricks known only to politicians, he became the dominant boss within his party. Then a quirk in American history helped him gain complete control of Kansas City. The Prohibition amendment had given rise to "bootlegging," and illicit sale of forbidden liquor had built the racketeering system in the United States,

with unscrupulous leaders like Capone in Chicago and John Lazia in Kansas City. I shall have much more to say about this gangster; it will suffice to relate here that he was a minor politician, who controlled, by fear and crime, thousands of voters in the North End. At that time 7,500 votes could swing any election in Kansas City. Lazia threw his political strength to Pendergast; the reasons will become obvious. In the next election, Pendergast, with his machine and the machine's use of fraudulent ballots, elected the Mayor and all the members of the City Council.

As a result the City Manager gleefully announced that the people had given him a mandate to conduct city affairs on a strictly partisan basis. He dismissed every city employee affiliated with the opposition party. Any person desiring city employment could obtain it only by receiving a card from his precinct captain and having it endorsed by the "big boss" at 1908 Main Street. The card was then taken personally to the City Manager, who unhesitatingly put the man to work. When the city hall was filled to overflowing, the job-seekers were listed in various departments and were assigned no work. They appeared at the municipal building only twice a month to receive their pay. I discovered that some of these precinct workers had full time employment elsewhere and simultaneously drew city pay for no work at all. This system cost the city millions of dollars. No plan was overlooked to rob the city. One especially clever instance was found. After the payrolls had been padded to the limit, the City Manager listed dozens of precinct workers under "claims against the city." I found that in some months more than \$100,000 were paid out on fictitious claims for damage on public

thoroughfares which "were settled out of court." On investigation, I discovered that many addresses were vacant lots or that they did not exist at all.

Other political workers were abundantly enriched by contracts given to favorites. Competitive bidding was ignored or became a farce. Gasoline and oil for city purposes were bought entirely through one firm, which had been formed for that purpose. Half interest in it belonged to Pendergast. Top prices were invariably paid. Pendergast rapidly increased his growing fortune through a perfectly legitimate business. He owned the Red-D-Mix Concrete Co., which produced a good cement, mixed and ready for use. No building, public or private, could be erected unless the builder used Pendergast's product. If one dared to defy the "boss" in this respect, he was allowed to excavate the basement and lay cement foundations; then the city inspector would nonchalantly appear upon the scene, chip off a bit of the foundation and regretfully say, "This cement isn't up to specification. You will have to tear it out and use the right material." In desperation the recalcitrant builder would plead for permission to continue. When he had been sufficiently humbled, he would be told that one cement met all requirements; if he used it, no hindrance would disturb him. Thus through political control of the City Manager and his hirelings, Pendergast obtained a complete monopoly of that essential product. It was good cement, but it cost much more per cubic yard than any competitive brand. Competition died. To further fatten the profits of the boss, it was decided to use a portion of the \$40,000,000 bond issue we had passed in 1931 for needed public improvements, to pave Brush Creek,

a beautiful meandering, bucolic stream, which wandered pleasantly through our south residential section, the entire width of our city from west to east. Enough expensive Red-D-Mix concrete was poured by political henchmen into that lovely creek to have build a town for 5,000 people. Its beauty was destroyed, and it has become a paved drainage ditch.

Mr. Pendergast's close political associates owned and operated construction enterprises, and to them went every contract for city work. They rented equipment like steam shovels and other power machines at fabulous prices. I later proved that the city could have bought and operated all that equipment by using only the amounts paid in rental over a six month period.

Further profits were received through the formation of a garbage company, which was owned largely by the Pendergast family. Other well managed cities either disposed of their garbage or sold it to the highest bidders, who reduced it to commercial usage. Kansas City, with the connivance of McElroy, gave it to Pendergast's concern and paid it by the ton to remove it in city vehicles. With a semblance of legality, these garbage trucks were weighed on city scales after they had been thoroughly watered by city fire hose. Even this crooked weight was increased by the inspectors the City Manager had appointed for the purpose. Then the garbage, for which the City Manager cheerfully paid the concern nearly half a million dollars annually to collect, was taken to a farm owned by that firm and was fed to five thousand swine. They were the only honest creatures that fed at the public trough.

It is difficult for us to imagine how extensively political

control gripped our city. It ranged far beyond the limits of municipal activities. It reached out in subtle ways to affect private lives. People were actually told what physicians they might use, what lawyers might practice, what merchants might do business. Personnel men in our factories came under the domination of the machine; and for years they would refuse to employ men unless they had passes from the boss. All city insurance and all surety bonds for contractors working for the city or county had to be negotiated through one insurance broker, a very good man, a close personal friend of the boss. Respectable business men soon found it a matter of safety to have Pendergast or McElroy identified with them in their concerns; in some instances they received blocks of stock; in others they were paid for serving on executive boards. These are some of the methods by which the tyrants of the machine profited personally. Later, it was proved in Federal court that Pendergast had also been receiving hundreds of thousands of dollars over a period of years from the big and the little gamblers who, in turn, were given complete political protection.

More than the flood of wealth, Pendergast enjoyed the enormous sense of power machine domination brought him. It flattered him, pleased his vanity, and removed a sense of social frustration, that must have developed as he grew from an obscure social stratum. He reveled in that power and the sense of superiority it brought him. He never attended public meetings or large social gatherings. This self-appointed ruler of the people took delight in the procession of notables who beat a track to the door of his sumptuous home. Governors, United States senators, legislators, col-

lege presidents, professional and business men, industrialists, with hat in hand went to him servilely, asking favors for themselves, for their relatives or for their friends. No man in Missouri, after 1930, could expect to attain public office, large or small, without T.J.'s endorsement. In that year he took forty-five hundred personal appointees as delegates to the State Democratic Convention at St. Louis, and he literally captured the convention. All other state machines became his affiliates. From then on his home became the mecca for any one with political ambitions.

One of the greatest annoyances in the battle that I started against this colossus came from eminent members of my own congregation. Several of them were personal physicians to Mr. Pendergast and another was his personal attorney. These worthy gentlemen simply could not believe the many harsh statements I was compelled to utter against him. They saw only his good qualities; and he undoubtedly had many. Even his bitterest enemies admitted that, if Pendergast made a promise or gave a pledge, he would never forget nor break his word. It was commonly known that, when he suddenly needed funds, he had taken \$100,000 worth of collateral to the bank, and the financial institution lent him a quarter of a million dollars, the banker and his family endorsing a personal note for the balance.

The dual nature of Mr. Pendergast is strikingly portrayed in an incident which reveals a broad streak of tenderness and compassion. Some years ago Pendergast applied for membership in the most exclusive social club in Kansas City. His application was strongly opposed by a prominent club member, noted for his personal generosity and his dy-

namic leadership in communal enterprises, especially those making for better business. Let us call him Mr. A. because he is still alive and is my friend. Mr. A. was an eminent Republican, and some months after he had used his powerful influence to prevent Pendergast's election to the swank club, he decided to run for a very important public office. His chances of election were exceptionally good. A few days before election, a pamphlet was brought to him. It was a sample of several hundred thousand printed and ready for distribution on the eve of the election. The pamphlet described, in vivid detail, a statutory crime Mr. A. had committed thirty years before, while a hot-blooded young man living in the West. He had been convicted and had served time in a state penitentiary. Mr. A. knew that if that pamphlet were circulated with the photostatic evidence of his prison record, he would lose not only the election but also the magnificent reputation he had established over a long period though his good works in our city. In desperation, he sent for a prominent attorney with whom he held true friendship and asked him what to do. The attorney immediately said, "There is only one man who can stop the circulation of this pamphlet, and that man is Tom Pendergast." Mr. A. tremblingly answered, "I opposed his election to the club, and he is so bitter that I think he will not help me."

The exigency of the matter compelled the lawyer to take the pamphlet to Pendergast. He read it slowly and recognized at once that his political antagonist could be destroyed by it. Pendergast smiled and said in substance: "Mr. A. was the man who kept me out of the club because of my social reputation. I didn't want to be in that club, but I did want

my wife and children to enjoy all the rights and privileges of the country club and the city club. I hold no hate for him. Tell him the pamphlet will not be distributed." Without delay Pendergast called in his subordinates responsible for the printing, denounced them scathingly for resorting to such methods of character assassination, and threatened dire consequences to all of them, if even one copy were circulated. The pamphlets were destroyed, and Mr. A. won the election. Certainly one possessed of such compassion cannot be considered wholly bad!

Such is a pen picture of Pendergast, the boss, who built a machine which made New York's Tammany Hall look like a child's toy. Let me consider briefly one of his associates, connected with him through political expediency.

John Lazia, racketeer, gangster and thug, found Kansas City a paradise for all his illegal ventures. When a young man, he had been convicted of highway robbery and had been sentenced to the state penitentiary for twelve years. He served less than one year, when he was paroled. His application for parole was signed by a man who soon became Prosecuting Attorney of our county. During my fight I suggested: "It would be interesting to know what relationship this act of Mr. Page in those days has to his relationship to Mr. Lazia today." Lazia was paroled by the Lieutenant-Governor while Governor Gardner was absent from the State. Lazia completely controlled the vast bootlegging enterprises of Jackson County and several neighboring counties. Whenever Federal agents, too few and too much overworked, would raid a speak-easy, a dive or a truck, the bartender or driver would "take the rap" for Lazia without

"squealing." He owned and operated the larger gambling joints and the "bookies." He too discovered that his political power gave him absolute protection.

He was a bosom friend of the Director of Police, a former auto-salesman, who had received this lucrative appointment from McElroy. Early in my investigation, I found, through this friendly comradeship the Director of Police had placed seventy-five ex-convicts on the police force at the behest of Lazia. Now I believe a man should not be eternally damned for his mistakes, and that convicts should be given every sensible chance to find livelihood with which to rehabilitate themselves. But I certainly believe that the last place in the world to put a convict is on a police force, where he faces constant temptation to aid former associates in crime. The old adage, "It takes a thief to catch a thief," cannot properly be applied here. Lazia wanted these ex-convicts on the police force to protect his illegal and profitable ventures. It is interesting to note, in passing, that the Pendergast lackey, who occupied the office of County Prosecutor, would never bring Lazia's gangsters to trial. I found that he had permitted bail to be posted by professional bondsmen, and that the total reached the huge sum of \$450,000, not one cent of which was ever collected or sought to be collected when criminals jumped their bonds and failed to appear in court. If one of Lazia's men should be arrested for robbery, arson, bombing, kidnaping or any other felony, he would soon be released on bond and would be back the next day zealously pursuing crime. The Attorney-General of the United States, Mr. Cummins, in 1932 felt this situation to be so important that he personally gave me the privilege

of examining any files at Leavenworth Penitentiary in my search for records of other criminals under Lazia's leadership.

Like many racketeers Lazia had an insatiable craving for money. Perhaps the large sums he must furnish political leaders who gave him protection necessitated an ever-increasing loot on his part. He therefore entered some phases of business. He, with co-criminals, operated a soft beverage plant. All the concessions in parks and public buildings could sell his products and none other. Almost every restaurant, hotel, drug store and grocery had to carry his soft drinks. His agents didn't waste time taking orders; his trucks would drive up and the driver would announce to the proprietor that he was instructed to deliver a certain number of cases of "pop" for cash. The proprietor who might object was unfortunate indeed. Within a few hours his place might be wrecked by a bomb or his stock spoiled by hoodlums. He had exclusive brokerage for a cheap grade of coffee, which he forced retailers and lunch places to use. He developed a towel business. Barber shops, office buildings and stores found it advisable to use his towels and laundry. He decided he would form a Protective Association for Dry Cleaners. Against their will these men, many of them barely able to exist, were forced to contribute a flat sum to the Protective Association. When they refused to join, they were annoyed by having their truck drivers receive summons to court for fictitious traffic violations; if that failed, their plants were sometimes bombed. Thirty dry cleaning plants were set on fire or bombed within six months. Not a single arrest was made. Of course Lazia and his gangsters accumulated illicit

gains through prostitution. Over two hundred and fifty bawdy houses operated openly in flagrant violation of the law. One street for four blocks was lined on both sides with houses of ill-fame, located two blocks from our Junior College. The inmates, who solicited students openly, were unmolested day or night. It is not an overstatement to say that every sizable business and industry in some way paid tribute to Lazia and his criminal racketeers.

Lazia was interested also in a small, Italian-language newspaper, and he used his potent political influence to procure advertisements for it. One episode vividly illustrates the close connection of the city administration with Lazia and his enterprises. You will recall the time, not so long ago, when the pent-up energies of young America sought a release in many kinds of orgies and stunts. It was the era of tree-sitting or pole-sitting. It was the time when sensation seekers whetted the public mania by all sorts of odd acts. This mild form of insanity reached its climax of idiocy in a contest called the "Walkathon." At least its originators knew something of ancient history, because they were obviously imitating, by slower pace, the old marathon. A huge arena was rented and the ballyhoo began. Orchestras played day and night with hardly an intermission. Couples began to walk and walk to jazz tunes. At stated intervals contestants, who were laboring hard to win the paltry cash prizes, were permitted to slump down upon cots to rest or sleep for fifteen minutes. Quick lunches and drinks were served. After several weeks of this inhuman grind, many contestants became so exhausted that their partners literally dragged them about the hall. This unusual Walkathon attracted hundreds

of auditors, who remained for days at a time. At the height of this public craze, John Lazia appeared upon the scene. He demanded that the operators of the Walkathon advertise in his paper. The operators humbly answered that their show neither needed nor gave advertising. Lazia grew ugly and replied: "You'll advertise, or else!" The next night McElroy, accompanied by five city officials, appeared at the arena. He gruffly called the manager to him and said: "Within five minutes this place must be emptied and closed." It was closed. When reporters asked McElroy on what grounds he had closed the Walkathon, he surlily replied, "On coffee grounds." The next day a number of outstanding attorneys, representing the Walkathon management, appeared in the United States District Court of Judge Merrill E. Otis, great and fearless American, and procured an injunction against the City Manager, and the place was reopened. The full record is filed in that court.

In brief, this is a sketch of the deplorable and menacing conditions which prevailed in my city on the afternoon of May 21, 1932, when I addressed the Government Study Club. I knew beyond the peradventure of a doubt that there was an alliance between our city administration of Kansas City and the underworld.

In that address I contrasted the successful administration of Cincinnati under Colonel Sherrill with that in our own city under McElroy. I showed paragraph by paragraph how the City Manager was violating the letter and spirit of the Charter. Without equivocation I called him the biggest law-breaker in the city. I properly laid the blame upon him for the disastrous conditions existing on the grounds that or-

ganized crime cannot exist without the protection of civic authorities. I charged him with manipulation and misuse of public funds. My indictment included all elements of malfeasance and misfeasance in office. I claimed that he had spoken falsely when he annually made a statement, under oath, that the city treasury contained a surplus. It was proved that this so-called surplus was, in reality, only a daily bank balance, which he maintained by juggling public funds. After an hour's exposure of the multifarious iniquities of the administration, I read the charter provisions for the legal punishment of those officials who violated the charter. I demanded that the City Council dismiss the City Manager. In its failure to do so, I challenged the County Prosecutor to exercise his authority under the state law to remove him from office.

The reception given that address amazed me. Those gentlewomen, leaders in the club life of the city, arose and shouted their approval. The same afternoon *The Kansas City Star*, one of America's great newspapers, which had from time to time attacked the machinations of the boss, carried in its home edition a two-column lead on the front page, containing a very full account. The next day editorial comment followed.

That night my telephone rang constantly. Some calls were from friends anxious about my welfare. Some were fearful that the gangsters would speedily bring retaliation upon me. Some exhorted me to drop the matter entirely; it was too dangerous. Other calls brought invitations from luncheon clubs and churches to repeat the address for them. The largest and most powerful organization in the city, the Cham-

ber of Commerce, was silent. Its president was an intimate friend of Pendergast and McElroy. Its attorney was a member of the City Council. Of course I was pleased with the eager and enthusiastic interest displayed by the groups who wanted me to appear. It told me that the community wanted direction and stimulation in a mighty struggle, which they knew must ultimately come. During that week I delivered three or four addresses a day, and wherever I spoke the audiences overflowed the room. The boss only chuckled and McElroy insultingly denied my charges; the Council scoffed. Politicians try to laugh their opponents to shame. Being a preacher, I was an easy target for their jeering.

On May 24th I was cordially invited to lay the case before the Ministerial Alliance of Kansas City. One hundred and twenty-five ministers were present; at the conclusion of the address, after a few questions were asked, a ringing resolution endorsing my stand was passed unanimously. Aid was promised and many ministers later held meetings in their churches for me. I regret, however, that only four, Roy O. Chaney, Joseph Myers, Edmund Kulp and G. Charles Gray, remained with me to the end.

On Memorial Day, 1932 I visited the Attorney-General of the State by appointment and laid my case before him. He told me and the reporters present that it was obvious that the City Manager had repeatedly violated the Charter. I asked him if he would act under cited provisions of the State law if the Prosecuting Attorney of Jackson County failed to act. He replied that he would take it under advisement. He failed to act.

On the evening of May 31, 1932 I appeared before the City

Council; in a written statement, furnishing proof of violations of Charter provisions for civil service and juggling of public funds, I demanded the trial of the City Manager for malfeasance in office. I brought evidence to show the partnership existing between the administration and the underworld.

The Mayor, Bryce B. Smith, received me with utmost courtesy. In all the charges made, before the city was finally redeemed, none suggested that he was personally corrupt. The one condemnation he really deserved was for his weakness in presiding over the Council. Had he been a man of courage, he could have kept the Council in line by constant protests over the lawlessness of the City Manager, with which the Mayor must have been fully conversant. Public sentiment and the press made it impossible to ignore the charges and the evidence. A few days later in caucus the Council passed a resolution declaring my charges insufficient and unworthy of exploration, ordered my statements expunged from the records and capped the climax by paying the City Manager a high tribute for his able and honest administration!

It was at the Council meeting that I first met John Lazia. He was accompanied by some of his trusted lieutenants; as I left the crowded Council chamber, John and his group surrounded me. With an ugly leer on his scarred face, he muttered: "Well, Rabbi, you didn't get very far did you?" I asked his name and replied, "No, Lazia, but we have just started."

That was literally true; the fight had just begun. Means must be found to translate exposure of corruption into posi-

tive constructive action. Jeremiah realized that in his day, when he exclaimed in the name of the Lord: "To root out and to pull down and to destroy and overthrow; to build and to plant." (Jer. 1:10)

We knew it would be a long, hard, dangerous process to root out and destroy a psychology of defeatism, so deeply rooted in the minds of the people, many of whom had reached the conclusion, so widespread in many American cities, that venal politicians with accompanying graft were the inevitable price we must pay for our democratic form of government. Partisanship, with its emanations of favoritism, had always existed and must, by fate, continue to exist. We knew the current opinion maintained by many leading people, that since bosses existed everywhere and since we perforce must have a political boss, we were indeed fortunate in having Pendergast, who was at least benevolent. We were aware of the difficulties which would hamper us as we set out to build and plant. We knew that we would be beset on all sides by cranks, by the disgruntled, by frustrated minor politicians, by self-seeking persons, all of whom might join us, not for patriotic reasons but for personal gain and personal aggrandizement. We realized from the very outset that we might spend years in honest labor to attain our goal, only to find that we had expelled one political gang and had established another gang in its stead. Fortunately we were optimists; we believed in the philosophy of the Charter and we had a deep-seated conviction that in a city with a population of 400,000 we could find nine men and women of character, who would obey the Charter in spirit and letter. If

nine such could not be found, we knew that the city deserved to be destroyed by the ravenous exploiters.

Holding such convictions, I announced, after the Council's rejection of my demand to dismiss the City Manager, that we would immediately begin a movement to recall the City Council. The announcement created a stir; it was the first time that any one had threatened to utilize that article of the Charter. Immediately we set about creating an organization, which we named "The Charter League." Speedily we sought and obtained incorporation from our Secretary of State. I had the honor of being president; Roy Chaney, vice-president; Joseph Myers, secretary; Roy Butters, treasurer; and my wife, a board member. The purpose of the Charter League was to form a strictly non-partisan agency, consisting of decent Democrats, decent Republicans and Independents, to use lawful means to meet the enemy at the polls and defeat him.

While we were waiting a few days for the Amicus Curiae to report to the court and for the Secretary of State to act upon our incorporation petition, I determined to search for additional data which would reveal the extent of Charter violations on the part of McElroy.

Without delay I went to the Director of Finance and told him I would like to see the last city audit. He replied there was no such audit. Then I firmly requested that I be permitted to examine the volumes containing the records of the bond funds. Hastily the director called the City Manager on his intercommunication telephone. He told him what I desired, and I could hear the irate, arrogant martinet shout

through the receiver, "Tell that blinkety blank fool to get out and stay out." I turned to the paragraph in the Charter which specifically gave to any citizen the right, during office hours, to examine any public record. The Charter was mandatory on that subject; there were no qualifying clauses. The helpless Director was confused; in rather piteous tones he admitted that he could do nothing against the wish of McElroy. This was splendid evidence that Kansas City was ruled by capricious men and not by law.

Denied the right to see public finance records, I proceeded from one department to another. Directors were seldom found in their offices, but when their underlings called the City Manager, he invariably told them to refuse me permission to examine the records and to kick me out.

Conscious now that I needed legal aid, I went to several Democratic attorneys and asked their help in procedures which would force the City Manager to open records to my scrutiny. They tremblingly told me they could not help me; it would mean their economic ruin; they had to practice before the Circuit Court all of whose members, except one, had been elected by the machine. I refrained from asking a Republican lawyer, because I wanted to avoid any possible implication that my movement was partisan. It must be kept free from any entanglement with any political party. I announced, through the press, the same night that, if I could secure the services of a good Democratic lawyer, I would take necessary legal steps to force the tyrannical hand of McElroy. The next day five telegrams from city and out-state lawyers offered assistance. I accepted the offer of a fine young man in Kansas City, Leland Hazzard, who val-

iantly, at great personal sacrifice, for years gave invaluable aid.

Armed with valid legal papers, I sought mandamus action. To my consternation several Judges, in the privacy of their chambers, told me they could not act. Among the nine judges was a member of my congregation, Judge Ben Terte, a close friend, whom I knew to be absolutely honorable. I knew he would meet his duty courageously, but I restrained my impulse to place the matter before him, because I wanted to escape any possible fanatical implication that this was a Jewish fight. Finally Judge Darius Brown, nominally a Republican, received me graciously. When I entered his courtroom, he recessed a case and took me to his private office. My attorney had not accompanied me, because we had decided it would be discreet to keep his identity secret for some time. He might be vulnerable. As soon as the door was closed, old Judge Brown put his arm about my shoulders affectionately and said: "Boy, you are giving a great service to the city; don't let anything stop you. Now what do you want me to do?" He chuckled when I showed him the mandamus papers. He told me to take them down to the Clerk of Court and pay the fees and to return in the afternoon. He concluded by saying, "Boy, I think you have started something that will turn those damned rascals out."

When I returned to Judge Brown that afternoon, he said: "The papers are ready; but if I give them to a deputy sheriff, he will find ways of delay. I commission you to take these papers to the City Manager yourself." I was delighted. Several gleeful reporters accompanied me. The secretary of the City Manager informed me blandly that he was not in,

though, through his open door, I could see him twiddling his thumbs as he sat at his desk. I entered without invitation. I had to; I was under orders of the court. McElroy turned livid with rage; when I handed him the mandamus papers, he threw them contemptuously into the wastebasket, while he called me every vile name he could remember. Sick at heart, I stood my ground and exercised abnormal patience. Inwardly I was so furious I wanted to strike him. Instead I pointed out that, if he disobeyed the judge, he could be cited for contempt. This served to mollify him. Slowly yet furiously he reached into the basket, retrieved the papers and read them. Though the documents stated that the City Manager should appear in court to show cause for his refusal to open city records to me, he decided swiftly to anticipate that necessity. Still fuming, he summoned his department heads; in my presence he told them to let me examine the records at any time. That was our first victory! By his stupid refusal in the first place he had actually corroborated my earlier indictments by his palpable desire to conceal other parts of his record. The public was asking, "What is McElroy hiding?"

Aided now by the Bureau of Civic Research, which had never been permitted to scrutinize the actual records and which had been given fake reports by department heads from time to time, we soon produced evidence that shook the community to its roots. We revealed that no sinking fund had been established, in spite of the provision in the City Charter which required five per cent of all city revenue be set aside annually for that purpose to pay interest and retire bonds. We proved that in sixteen years McElroy had

squandered nearly \$40,000,000 (forty million). We even showed that McElroy was double-crossing the political appointees of Pendergast, because for at least eight years he had been padding the payrolls so freely that there wasn't sufficient money in the treasury to pay them all. For years all city employees were paid only eleven months' salary for twelve months' work. He had to find some way to take care of all the "boys" Pendergast sent him for employment. We convinced the public that McElroy's boasted "country bookkeeping" was in reality crooked bookkeeping. We revealed, furthermore, to an unbelieving public, that a deficit of \$11,000,000 then existed in the waterworks' fund. McElroy had been paying interest on bonds to keep the city's credit good with banks from monies that he persistently diverted from the bond issue of 1930. He had also used bond funds to meet current pressing operating expenses. All of this and more was completely substantiated when an outraged citizenry financed a private audit in 1939, seven years later.

Though these revelations were extremely important, I understood very well that the imagination of the people could not be stirred to the point of action through a mere recital of financial statistics, even though they starkly revealed basic dishonesty in all its naked realism. Therefore I went to the City Clerk and requested him to give me sufficient "recall blanks" so that I might initiate a special election for the recall of City Councilmen, who were fundamentally responsible for all derelictions of McElroy, whose crookedness they must have known and condoned. The clerk looked at me in blank astonishment: "Recall blanks," he

said, "what do you mean?" "Oh," I replied, "the Charter requires you, as City Clerk, to have on hand at all times a sufficient supply of blanks to be circulated among the people to nominate candidates to run against the present councilmen in a special election, to be called thirty days after the papers are filed with you." With perfect poise he answered, "I have never read the Charter; let me see it." After reading it he continued, "That is unnecessary. We already have a good Council." That stupid reply made another visit to Judge Brown imperative, and suitable action was taken to make the clerk conform to that Charter provision.

Visits to the Personnel Department were astounding. The Director confessed to me that he had no forms for civil service examinations, that no examinations had ever been held, that he had absolutely nothing to do with hiring or firing of city employees. I showed him the Charter and reminded him of the oath of office which he had taken when sworn into office. He read those paragraphs with absorbed interest, possibly for the first time. I pointed out that the Charter required him to keep a complete list of all city employees; and when a department required specific workers, he must send it the reserved list of those who had qualified by passing examinations. He was obviously amazed. He muttered that he didn't know much about it; in fact, he came to his office only a few hours a week. He sorrowfully reiterated that he had no lists containing the names of city employees. He suggested that I might find the names of employees through department heads. That was a most difficult task, but in desperation I undertook it.

My next hardship came from the Director of Police. He

was an intolerant, blustering light-weight. It was shown several years later that in the very week Verne Miller, America's then number one enemy, was arrested by federal agents, our Director of Police had played golf with him on one of our public courses. Such was the man to whom I must go for important information. He kept me waiting for several hours, while I heard him boisterously conversing with some of his cronies. As I waited, policemen would pass through the anteroom and scowl. Some tried to provoke me into making some rash or indignant statement. I was aware that, if they could make me appear ridiculous or make me desert my dignity, they could set me up as a laughing-stock and vitiate the serious task I had assumed. I prayed silently for protection, for courage and for patience. When the Director of Police finally decided to grant me time, I requested him to let me see a complete list of his employees and a full payroll. He said he had neither, but the Auditor might have one. It required court action to procure even a false list from him. I had names of men in strategic police positions, whose names were not recorded on his handwritten sheet. He had removed their names when I charged employment of ex-convicts.

Reppert, the Director of Police, nearly had apoplexy when I calmly requested him to show me to the Bertillon room. He raved like a maniac; then he suddenly grew calm and, with sanctimonious mien, tried to cajole me with a sermon to the effect that, since many people whose pictures appeared in the rogues' gallery were now respectable citizens, it would be wicked to expose the crime of their earlier years. As best I could, I soothed his anxiety about former criminals

with my assurance that I would use such information only to expose other men employed by him at Lazia's demand. He grew purple with rage and ordered me out of his office. I left with the assertion that the court would open the rogues' gallery to my inspection. It did. It required little searching to notice that many pictures had been removed and destroyed since I first charged the Police Department with harboring criminals. It was lucky indeed that a policeman, discharged for political reasons, had visited me a few days before to tell me about a cross-reference system he had installed and about which his successor knew nothing. By using the key to that system it was easy to find the data I needed.

Sufficient evidence had now been compiled to lend significance to the recall movement I would inaugurate through the Charter League. *The Kansas City Star* magnificently carried full length items, as we continued to expose the knavery of our city officials. Without the columns and the editorials of the *Star* our best efforts would have been futile.

It is difficult for me to describe succinctly the reactions that came from two groups, the racketeering politicians and my own congregational membership. The politicians were plainly worried and raised a great clamor over the self-righteous closing of a few dives and houses of ill fame. To this petty boasting I replied: "The elimination of a few filthy saloons and brothels will not satisfy the people of Kansas City. Those are only pimples on the body politic; only symptoms of the corruption within the body which has existed for years." As long as our charter group spent its time in harassing the gang merely by oratory at large and excited

public gatherings, especially in churches, the politicians were not disturbed. They could scoff and sneer and be smug in the expressed thought, "The preachers will soon grow tired and the noise will blow over." However, as soon as plans for the Charter League progressed, the politicians saw clearly that we were translating words and ideals into action. The racketeers began to fight back in their vicious way. They tapped my telephones in my Temple study and in the Charter League offices. They ransacked the files in my study and stole the records from the League office. They threatened me and they attempted to bribe me. Pendergast, McElroy and Council members used their vast and powerful influence upon my highly-respected members to exert all pressure upon me to force me out of the fight. All through the years until the city was cleansed, one of my hardest jobs was not fighting the underworld, but in using my energy and time to convince thoroughly nice people, honorable men, that conscience and the power of religious conviction drove me unswervingly into the fray and that, as respectable citizens, they ought to be in it also.

Constant threats came from the underworld; my campaign was hurting their illegal gains, and if we succeeded in recalling the Council and procuring a faithful City Manager, their rackets would be entirely eliminated. As I drove to a North Side meeting one night, my car was forced to the curb and a shot was fired. Fortunately friends had equipped my car with bullet-proof glass. After this incident the Governor, upon the insistence of friends, assigned to me two men, deputized as deputy coroners. In Missouri the coroner has an authority transcending that of any police official. The

idea of having armed guards accompany me everywhere I went was extremely distasteful. They not only drove the car, but also placed me between them when I walked through overflow crowds to meeting-places. They even guarded homes (against my wish) in which I officiated at weddings and funerals. They attended all Temple services. When I protested, they said simply, "We are under orders." During this time, while I realized my life was in constant jeopardy through attack of some dope fiend or sly gangster, I experienced no real personal fear, though, I confess, I had the constant dread that my precious wife, just convalescing from an operation that nearly took her life, might in some way be harmed. Thugs and kidnapers under the protection of Lazia and his more respectable political friends found a safe haven in Kansas City. Ransoms were often collected there. For months, though I refused to be armed at any time, I never went to sleep at night without a loaded pistol on the floor beside my bed. I was determined that, if any one attempted to harm my wife, I would defend her with my life.

The Sanford Brown Post of the American Legion, after endorsing my campaign, sent word to Lazia that, if anything happened to me, they would clean out the North End.

Not all the denizens of the underworld were my enemies. Several proved to be very good friends. One especially rendered our cause incalculable aid. Several weeks after the campaign had begun and I was constantly pounding emphatically upon the subject of the alliance which existed between the city administration and the underworld, the night clerk of the apartment hotel in which we live called me at three o'clock in the morning and said in frightened tones,

"There is a man on the telephone who insists on talking to you. He has been calling at this hour for three or four mornings, but I have refused to disturb you. This time he is cursing violently and says that, if I don't let his call through, he will blow up the building." Under the circumstances I permitted the call to come through and asked the night man to "listen in" and to take notes on the conversation. In a husky and evidently disguised voice, my caller told me that he hoped I would "get" Lazia and that he wished to give me some "leads." He said, "My name to you is 'Pal' and I will call you when I have news for you. This hour is the best one for me to use. Please instruct the clerk to let my calls through." I cautioned him that even my house line might be tapped as my other telephones were. He laughed and said, "I know it, but my mother wouldn't recognize the voice I am using." That first night Pal told me the exact address in which several hundred slot machines were stored, ready for Lazia's distribution, but warned that they were guarded by policemen to prevent other racketeers from stealing them. At the time such machines were unlawful in Missouri.

I knew it would do no good to inform the police; so I took the chance of enlisting the aid of federal agents. I suggested to them that, although they were not interested in slot machines, it would be helpful if they could break up one of Lazia's rackets. They could search the place, ostensibly seeking liquor. That evening the *Star* carried an exciting account of the federal raid. They did find illicit liquor and confiscated the machines too.

Morning after morning, at the precise hour of three, Pal would call me. I kept a pad on the night table by my bed,

and I would make memoranda of addresses and "leads." Invariably Pal's information was correct. He told me about narcotic joints and about speakeasies. Just as invariably federal agents would make their raids. It was through information Pal gave me, involving various sources of Lazia's income, which I always relayed to the United States Attorney, that it was determined to use the same procedure with him which the Government had been using with Capone in Chicago. An array of data, gathered in widely separated parts of the country, was sufficient to try and to convict Lazia two years later on charges of income tax evasion. Thank God for the income tax! It not only produces needed revenue, but has also proved an effective instrument for the removal and imprisonment of some of America's worst enemies.

I have often wondered what happened to Pal! I wish I might shake his hand and thank him for the invaluable aid he gave us in cleansing our beloved city. Perhaps he was discovered by Lazia and so might have been one of the six gangsters found slain on our streets within two weeks. If so, none of his slayers was apprehended. Or perhaps Pal may have been the one who shot and killed Lazia with slugs from a sub-machine gun on July 10, 1934, as he stepped from his luxurious limousine in the driveway of his fashionable apartment building, while out on bail pending appeal. Only God knows where Pal is; may He rest his tarnished soul!

My congregation suffered severely during these first months of our civic battle. Many members resigned under Pendergast pressure. Some visited me privately (under cover

of night) to tell me that they believed in the cause, but that they must withdraw because they were victims of reprisals. Almost every business required some sort of city permit; their owners were certain the threats to cancel permits would be carried out and they would be driven from business. Others informed me that their taxes had been raised exorbitantly. One real estate owner told me that a building, assessed at \$25,000, had been raised to \$150,000. Many others doubtless experienced the same kind of reprisal, and they had no recourse. The whole county was under machine domination. Some members were furnishing supplies to city institutions; they lost that business! Even attorneys felt the pernicious power of the machine when they appeared in municipal or county courts. Other resignations came from members who were themselves machine stalwarts. Some were petty politicians! Some were boon companions of Pendergast and McElroy. I repeat without exaggerated emphasis that one of the greatest hardships in my campaign emanated from decent people who had been recipients of political favors, like tax reduction or cancellation of traffic tickets, or who were under friendly obligation to machine despots. The resignation of dozens of members affected the financial condition of the congregation so seriously that I requested the Board to take from my salary any loss that might be sustained through my activities. The Board never accepted that offer. Members who resigned have returned.

The officers and Board members, who served B'nai Jehudah in those trying days, deserve my sincere tribute. They were under terrific pressure from within and without. Though, of course, frequent discussions were held in my

presence at board meetings, there was never a demand nor an intimation that I be forced to retreat or to desert my work. I am sure that all Board members acknowledged my spiritual and my American right to be thus engaged. Individual Board members were concerned about my physical health; they knew that I was striving to keep my Temple work unimpaired while carrying on the enormous civic work; some knew I was compelled to labor as much as eighteen or twenty hours a day. Others were fearful that I might be destroyed by the gang. All tacitly agreed on my right to conduct the fight, and some openly championed that right. Through it all the congregational leaders were my friends.

The pall of fear which encompassed the community in general and the big business men in particular was impressed deeply upon me, when I found it necessary to solicit funds to maintain the offices of the Charter League with its staff of investigators. Such men as William Volker, benefactor, who cheerfully gave me \$1,500, and Sigmund Harzfeld, philanthropist, who contributed \$500, permitted me to publish their names. Many others contributed generously, but made me promise, on my word of honor, that I would keep their identities secret. The president of a large corporation expressed great interest in our civic crusade and asked me to return in a day or so. When I called upon him shortly afterward, he took me into his private office and said, "I cannot give you a check because your endorsement might be discovered, if it went through the bank." He handed me a plain manila envelope with a thousand dollars in old bills. He exacted a promise that I would never mention his name.

The Charter League was never properly financed. It re-

quires rich men to solicit large sums from most other rich men. There were no wealthy men in the ranks of the Charter League. When I found it necessary to close the offices of the Charter League more than a year later, it was necessary for me to borrow personally \$3,600 to pay salaries and printers' bills. I finished paying the last note a year ago. My ministry has been quite expensive.

June 17, 1932 was a memorable day. It was not only my wedding anniversary, it was also the date on which we held our first rally under the auspices of the Charter League. It was held in the largest downtown church and 2,200 people packed it completely. I had asked Mr. Murray Seasongood, who had successfully led a similar fight in Cincinnati, to be the speaker that night, but by wire, because of his inability to come, he suggested as a substitute Mayor Russel Wilson of his city. Mayor Wilson, in a stirring address, commended our program and brought us inspiration to fight on to victory. He warned us that it would be a long, hard battle. He was right! That night, and the following months, we enrolled 45,000 members in the Charter League; most came from the "common" folk, the backbone and the heart of America.

On June 18th my wife and I left Kansas City to attend the International Rotary Convention at Seattle, Washington, to which I had been elected a delegate by my Club. My decision to attend the convention was forced upon me by my great and good friend, Dr. B. L. Sulzbacher, my personal physician, one of the noblest and most erudite men I have ever known. He was one of the very few professional men who advised and encouraged me. Dr. Sulzbacher in-

sisted that, if I kept on "burning the candle at both ends," I would soon be exhausted mentally and physically. There is no doubt the awful tax upon my energies was beginning to tell upon my nerves. It is fortunate the good doctor gave such valid advice. The grueling days and sleepless nights had taken toll. The first quiet hours of complete relaxation on the train, the first in months, nearly sent me into hysterics. The sudden release from turmoil, the cessation of jangling telephone bells, the comparative quietude of the train, the absence of cheering crowds and inquiring reporters nearly drove me to distraction. Were it not for the cheerful, sweet companionship of my wife, with her deep understanding, I am certain I would have been broken, not by battle, but by peace.

Upon arrival at Seattle reporters swarmed around me to inquire about the details of the home struggle and to suggest that Lazia's underworld connections might reach as far as the West coast. The suggestion brought me no comfort. After several days spent in attending convention sessions, I felt so ill that I consulted a physician, who urgently ordered me to get a thorough rest. He suggested a voyage to Alaska. We are grateful to him for that idea, because the twelve days spent on a leisurely boat, as it wound through the gorgeous scenery lining the inner channel, left us imperishable memories, which not even a European and Palestinian voyage in 1935, made possible by friends, could transcend.

Four hours before the boat sailed I received an important telegram from Mr. Henry J. Haskell, great and brilliant editor of *The Kansas City Star*, informing me that, in my ab-

sence, many rumors were being viciously circulated to the effect that I had been bribed to stay out of Kansas City, that I had been fired by the congregation, and that Lazia had so terrified me that I was afraid to return. Mr. Haskell insisted that such rumors unanswered would undermine our cause. He requested me to send him a collect message without limit. Accordingly, I wired the following straight telegram on June 24, 1932:

"There is absolutely no truth in the rumor that I am not returning to Kansas City or that I have an indefinite leave of absence. My congregation is one of the best in America, and I have no thought of leaving it. I feel Kansas City offers me the finest opportunities for spiritual and American service that can be found anywhere.

"I am certain that, when the recall election is prepared by the Charter League, my congregants of good character and fine civic integrity will be standing shoulder to shoulder with me in the fight against political corruption.

"I shall be in Kansas City in July to take up the war and relentlessly to wage it against Pendergast and his gang, until men and women are placed in office pledged to observe the spirit and letter of our great charter."

On the same day the *Star* carried my telegram, it also ran an item given by Mr. Benjamin Natkin, kindly president of my congregation:

"The congregation's board of directors has not discussed Rabbi Mayerberg's work in forming the Charter League," Mr. Natkin said. "We have felt that his activities as a private citizen were entirely outside his church work. So long as he does not neglect his church duties, his outside activities

are no concern of ours. His energy is so great that all his outside efforts have not interfered in any way with his work as rabbi."

The Alaskan trip was invigorating; it restored our waning strength and refreshed our souls. My wife and I returned in July eager for the next stage of the harsh struggle.

For weeks the trusted members of the Charter League circulated petitions of recall. No prominent men had permitted the use of their names as candidates to succeed the members of Council who were to be recalled. The difficulty in acquiring any candidates at all delayed us in our work. We needed honest, able men, capable of carrying responsibility. Though some of our candidates, by gauge of business success, were mediocre, they had the prime requisite of integrity. When our petitions were finally taken to the City Clerk for certification to the Board of Election, according to law, he told us that he and his office force would examine each name and address. In a few days he announced that our petitions were fraudulent and that he had destroyed them. We had no recourse. Our competent legal authorities told us bluntly that the knavish city administration could resort to technicalities and prevent a recall for years. They urged us to wait for the general city election in 1934. That meant waiting nearly fourteen months. Obviously the Charter League could not remain passive. With the consent of the Executive Committee, I announced that we would close the offices but that the Charter League would quietly work toward the next election. All of us realized that constant indictments would soon dull the ears of the people and without action would be useless. Furthermore, the amount of

work I had been expected to do as originator of the anti-machine movement and founder of the League plus my own heavy congregational labor, was more than any one man could endure. Under the circumstances we used the right judgment. I informed my Board, thanked it for its unfailing consideration and set myself to the task of serving my congregation. From then until the city had been swept clean, I never desisted in pulpit and platform from my attack upon the machine.

In 1934 I helped to organize and wrote the preamble of the Constitution of the National Youth Association. It was composed of young college men and women just establishing themselves in the economic and professional life of Kansas City. This fine group was headed by my young friend, Joseph Fennely, whom we ultimately elected to Council. That young, virile organization of fearless American youth urged me to run as candidate for Mayor in 1934. Naturally I declined, as I did the offers of other independent Citizens' Committees, when they asked me to run for Council and Congress, on the basis that my sole value to the community lay in my ministry and the spiritual influence it might exert. A former President of Missouri University, Dr. A. Ross Hill, became our candidate, and we surprised everybody by polling a vote of 88,000. The machine beat us with 65,000 ghost votes. The politicians gloated but they were plainly worried. In that election as I rode through the North Side with co-workers. I saw a car without license plates touring the precincts. In it were four men with guns. We drove to police headquarters and reported it to the Director of Police. He snarled and waved us aside. That after-

noon four men were killed. Public reaction was so great that McElroy fired Reppert. It seemed for a while that Kansas City was doomed to perpetual misrule by the machine.

However, two years later Tom Pendergast made a great political blunder. He permitted the wrong man to run for Governor. With Pendergast's support Lloyd Stark was elected by a huge majority. But Pendergast didn't know Stark. He thought Stark's campaign promise to clean up the election board and police commissioners in Kansas City, which a recent state law gave him the right to do, was political hooey. But Stark was an honest man and he carried out his promises to the letter. In addition, the Governor pushed through the legislature a law to establish permanent registration in Kansas City. With an able and honest election commission appointed by Governor Stark and a strong, honorable board of police commissioners appointed by him, we began to see the glimmer of a new day. We set to work for the 1938 election and won a partial victory. We elected two members to Council in spite of the fact that the election board had insufficient time to remove all the ghost votes and to install sufficient reliable tellers and judges.

Two years before we had been helped immeasurably by the Federal Courts. 1936 was a year of national election; since Congressmen were on the ballot, the court could take action. Judge Albert Reeve and Judge Merrill E. Otis called Federal grand juries, which took months to gather evidence on vote frauds.

The fearless U. S. Attorney, Morris Milligan, indicted several hundred election officials and many were sent to Leavenworth. Be grateful for our Federal Judiciary; it, with

a free press, is the unwavering bulwark of American liberty!

Viewing now our struggle to cleanse our city leads me to the inevitable conclusion that, had it not been for the activity of the Federal authorities, the fearless and intelligent Federal grand juries, and the courageous Federal Judges, the people of Kansas City might have found it impossible to break the shackles of boss misrule. Weight is given to this conclusion by the inescapable fact that county grand juries did not indict any person for vote frauds, nor did the County Prosecutor gather evidence to present to those juries for indictments. The Federal authorities did.

Our next piece of good fortune came also from Federal authorities. On April 7, 1939 Tom Pendergast was indicted by the Grand Jury for income tax evasion and was successfully prosecuted by Milligan, and was later sentenced by the great Judge Otis to fifteen months at Leavenworth, to be followed by five years of probation, during which time he was forbidden, by the terms of parole, to participate in politics in any way.

With the removal of the Big Boss, the people courageously awoke. McElroy resigned on April 14, 1939. Now the terrified business men sprang into action; Chamber of Commerce, Real Estate Board, Better Business Bureau, and Merchants Association joined in a mighty denunciation of corruption in public life. Those of us who had borne the brunt for years rejoiced. We helped create the "Forward Kansas City Movement," and I served on its Executive Board. After months of clamorous meetings, in which business men seemed to be more interested in audits and surveys, which might point the way to reduce taxes, we saw clearly that the

organization could achieve little. Seven years before we had exposed what they were now finding. The older group believed that the incumbent Mayor, Bryce Smith, and the Council would now reform. We knew very well that such men, who had violated their own oath of office and had permitted McElroy and Pendergast and Lazia to corrupt the city, could not be trusted. We soon called into being a United Campaign Committee. The women of the city joined us heroically and performed prodigious tasks. Gentle women walked from door to door receiving signatures of those who would join what we now called the Clean-Up-Campaign. A broom was our symbol. We wasted no time in the futile attempt to procure a recall election. We initiated a special election in order to adopt an amendment to our Charter which would reduce the terms of office of the Mayor and Councilmen from four to two years. Otherwise, we would have been forced to wait for a regular election two years hence.

A remarkable campaign ensued under the dynamic leadership of Hal C. Luhnnow, Porter C. Hall, J. C. Nichols, Paul Barnett, Kenneth E. Midgley, Rev. Robert I. Wilson, Ward C. Gifford, Joseph Fennely, Webb Townley, Jr., Vincent J. O'Flaherty, Jr., T. J. Patten, Edgar Shook, William Kemp, Harry Gambrel, Russell Greiner, Mrs. George C. Gorton, Mrs. Williston Munger, Mrs. Russel C. Comer and Mrs. Samuel S. Mayerberg.

Proud men and women did yeoman service in the creation of precinct organizations. Even the former U. S. Senator, James A. Reed, who had been a machine stalwart for years

and who had fought us in previous years, gave his mighty assistance. Business men openly gave generous contributions in time and money. *The Kansas City Star* was magnificent in editorials and news coverage. The brooms were beginning to sweep. We adopted the amendment in February, 1940, with an overwhelming majority. The machine was beginning to totter. Now we had to prepare a strong ticket to present to the people in an election set for March in the amendment itself. This was a huge task. Candidates must be men and women of impeccable character and of outstanding ability. We chose as mayoralty candidate, John B. Gage, eminent lawyer, who had, for years, protested against civic corruption. Council candidates were selected on their merits, regardless of national party affiliation. We waged a whirlwind campaign. For three weeks, day and night, I worked with scores of others addressing meetings of all kinds, in churches, in storerooms, in squalid halls. Radio time was at my disposal frequently.

Perhaps it was undignified for me to take the stump. Perhaps my contribution should have come my own pulpit, as it did on numerous occasions. I am sure that, unless conditions ever become abnormal, I shall always refrain from addressing gatherings of political nature and shall speak only from my pulpit. I condone my act only on the basis that I had been fighting civic corruption for seven years, frequently alone, and I realized that this was our first and, doubtless, our last chance to destroy the machine.

A personal distress came to me during the campaign. The machine lackeys, bereft of their leader through the incar-

ceration of Pendergast, rallied around one of his political cronies. They tried to build an effective organization to combat the United Campaign.

In some unexplained fashion, after they had failed to secure any able man to run under their sullied banner, they persuaded a pastor of a church to prevail upon the president of his Board of Elders to accept the nomination for Mayor on the machine ticket. It happened in the preceding November that a fire had completely destroyed the building of his church. Before the embers ceased to glow, my generous Board commissioned me to talk personally to the pastor and his Board and extend a cordial invitation to use our Temple and its facilities without cost, until such time as a new edifice might be erected. The proffered invitation was gratefully accepted and all was serene for five months. The minister and I were and are intimate friends; but I found it imperative to fight those whom he endorsed for that election. Not a man on the machine ticket had ever lifted his voice against the raging criminality of the incumbent administration. We took the logical position that, although no criticism could be raised against the personal integrity of any man on the opposition ticket, we had to presume that their quiescence during our civic debauchery would place them in the role of respectable fronts to conceal the duplicity of a crumbling machine. It was embarrassing under the circumstances to be using the same house of worship with such irreconcilable political viewpoints. Suffice to say we elected John B. Gage and seven out of eight Councilmen by the unbelievable majority of 92,000. The people were awake. The

machine was thoroughly thrashed for the first time in sixteen years.

While the campaign was in progress, the machine was especially vicious toward me. It persuaded several of my members to denounce me on radio and in the press. It circulated rumors that I was to be dismissed immediately after the campaign. Members were forced to send in resignations. I believed many of the rumors to be false, but I was resolved to fight hard to justify my participation in a righteous and non-partisan cause and to save my cherished career. The regular Board meeting of the congregation fell on the night after election. I attended it as usual. A number of resignations were read. Promptly a Board member moved they be accepted without regret, explaining that he felt that men who resigned because of my civic activities didn't deserve membership in B'nai Jehudah. One after another the Board members voiced their commendation. A resolution was unanimously adopted commending my activities and thanking me for contributing to the welfare of our city. I had come to that meeting prepared to defend the right of ministers everywhere to translate their spiritual affirmations into realities of civic righteousness. The generosity of the Board members so overwhelmed me that I could not speak my gratitude; they received it by the smile through my tears.

John B. Gage and the able men serving with him under the efficient and honest administration of L. P. Cookingham, City Manager, have written a saga of civic decency and achievement that can well be emulated by all American cities. The spirit of our citizenry has changed completely.

The pall of fear has disappeared. Heads are held erect and civic pride has replaced cringing shame. That spirit was demonstrated when we triumphantly marched to the polls last March and returned the Gage regime to office for another constructive term.

Our community has learned the full significance of the saying of the Book of Proverbs, "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. 14:34)

In bringing this narrative to you, I have been compelled to use the first personal pronoun. The events are so closely interwoven with my life that I could not review them objectively.

In conclusion, I express my profound gratitude for the high privilege granted me by Dr. Morgenstern, the Faculty, and Board of Governors. I utter the humble prayer that the ever-living God may grant each of you many blessed years of service to Him and to our fellowmen. Be strong and of good courage!

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